# VICE

FREE
VOLUME 14 NUMBER 8

Pro Surfer
Danny Fuller

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IS FAR IF
YOU'VE COME
A LONG
WAY

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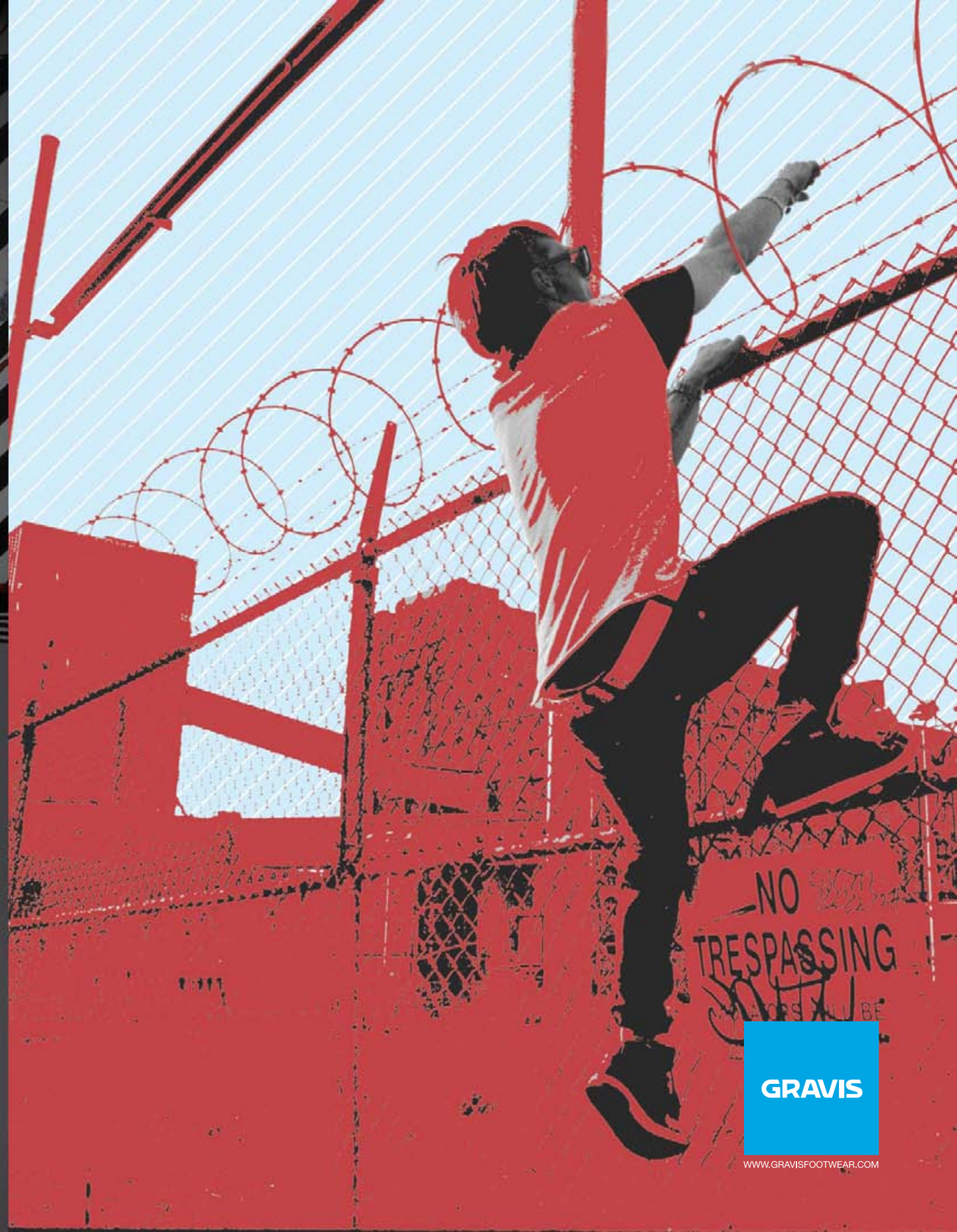


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*Photo by Leo Fitzpatrick. "This is Dash and Terence. We were in Berlin, at a dinner after our friend's art opening. This was their go-to look when I pulled out the camera."*

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*Cover illustration by David Choe*

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*Photo by Alex Brown. "I was in a McDonalds somewhere upstate on my way to go camping. This kid was sitting there on his own wearing a Vader helmet that did the breathing sounds. I always wanted a helmet like that when Star Wars first came out but my parents would never buy me one."*


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# ROB DYRDEK'S THUMB TELLS *SKATE* WHY HE'S TIRED ALL THE TIME.

***skate:*** So, Dyrdek's thumb, why are you so tired all the time?

**Dyrdek's thumb:** Because I'm obsessed with this gap to rail over by the docks. I've been staying up all night trying to make it. It's doable, but it's nasty.

*s:* In San Vanelona?

dt: Yeah, that's pretty much the only place I skate. There and in Rob's sink. On a fingerboard he's kept around since like 1990.

*s:* I thought those things were just for fingers.

dt: I'm still a digit. I hate it when people are all literal about the thumb-finger thing.

*s:* Sorry. Didn't know it was such a sensitive subject. So, your career's really blowing up these days. How are you dealing?

dt: It's all pretty surreal. The travel, the free gear, the ladies, skating as a job. It's way different than my old gig.

*s:* What was that?

dt: Masseur.

*s:* So this is a dream come true. I mean, after rubbing on dudes for a living?

dt: It's a step in the right direction.

*s:* What's the goal then, if it's not pulling switch feeble grinds for scratch?

dt: I've always wanted to be a pastry chef. I think rolling cannolies would be pretty zen.

*s:* So you're a real renaissance thumb?

dt: I'm into a little bit of everything.

*s:* You thumb wrestle?

dt: We just call it wrestling. For me to say thumb wrestle is redundant.

*s:* So it's just skating to you, not thumb skating?

dt: Exactly.

*s:* Tell me about the flickit controls in the game.

dt: I'm not really sure what that is, but if you're talking about the way the game feels just like real skating, then, yeah, flickit controls are the [shiz].

*s:* What about the environments?

dt: San Vanelona is the perfect place. Vancouver, S.F., Barcelona all rolled up into one. It's one sick spot after another. But I could do without all the haters who vibe you when you roll through.

Oh, and I wish there were cops to run from.

*s:* Have you ever been arrested?

dt: Once. Some store clerk thought I was a shoplifter who had been stealing candy from his place for months.

*s:* Did you have to do the full line up thing?

dt: Yeah. It was actually kinda fun.

*s:* So you're straight gangsta?

dt: Fully. If I wore pants, I'd wear 'em way below my knuckle.

"FOR ME TO SAY THUMB WRESTLE IS REDUNDANT"

—ROB'S THUMB

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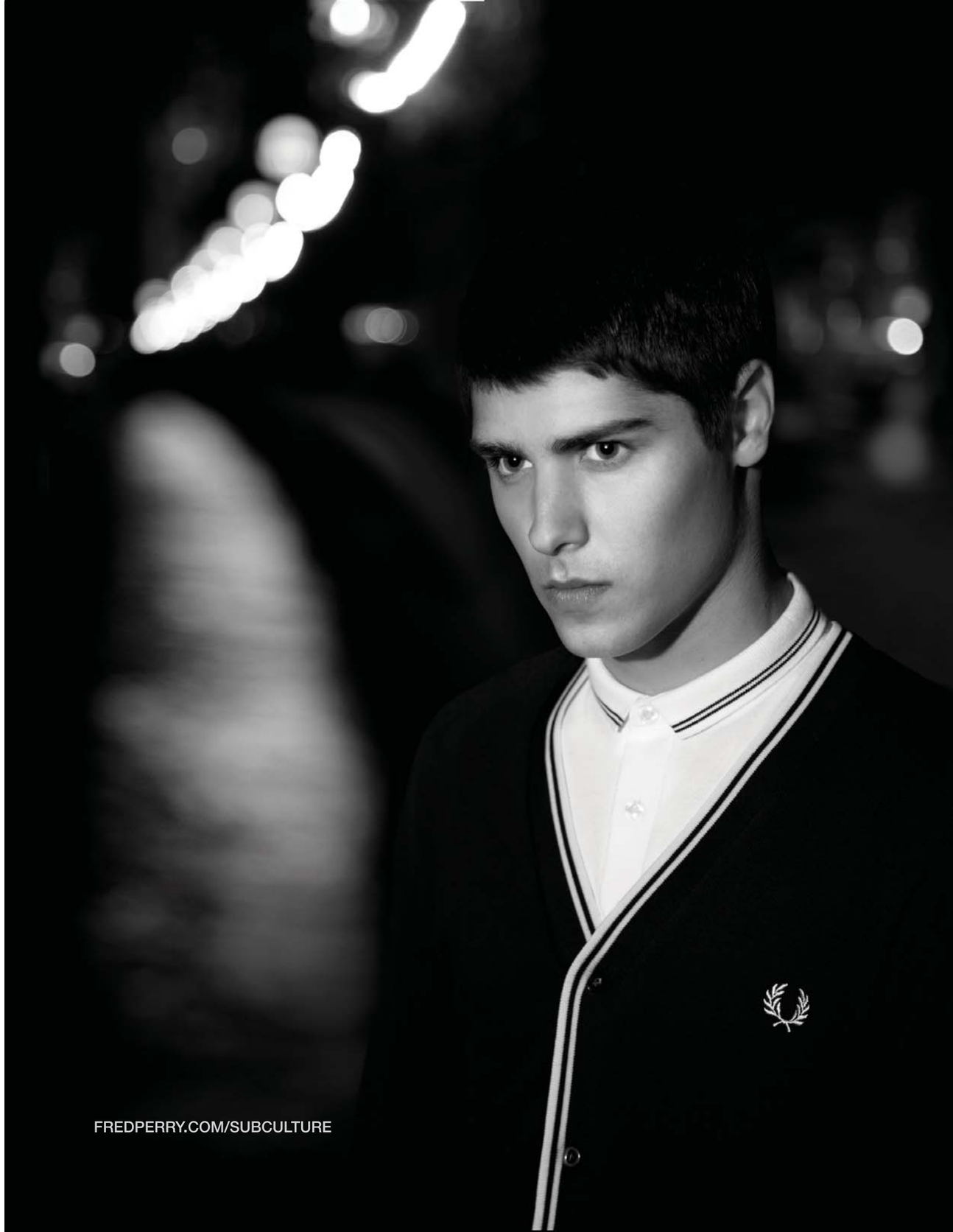

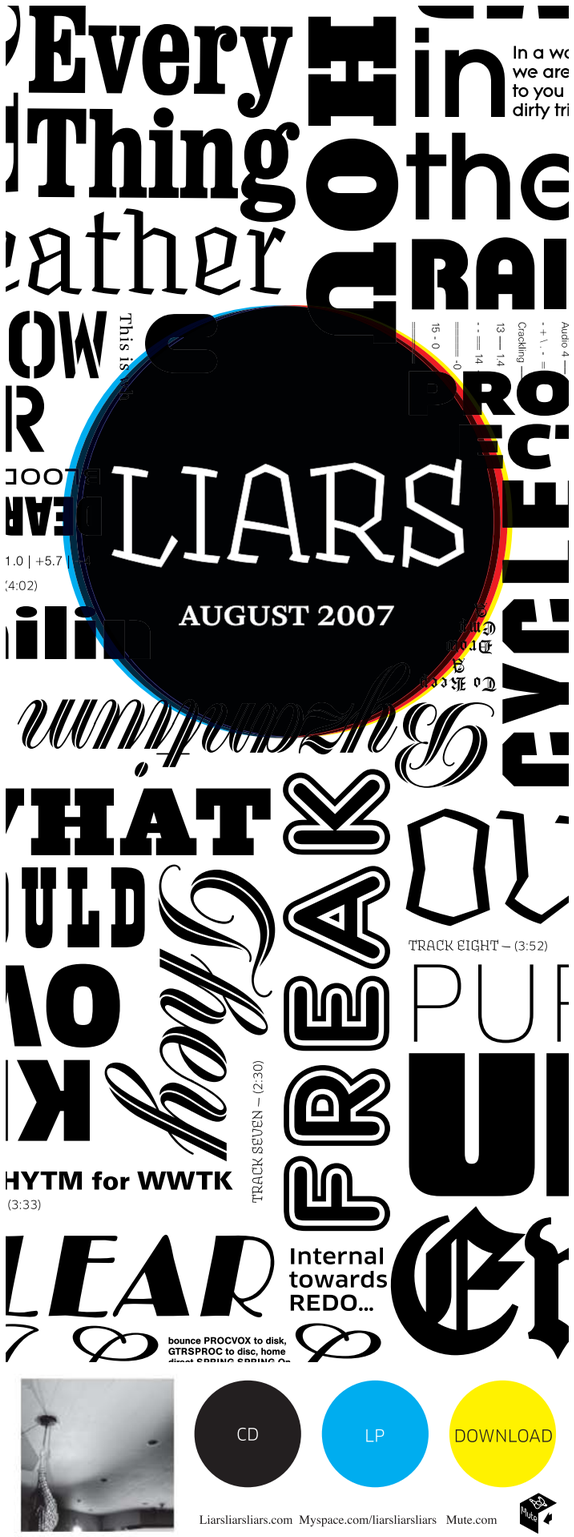


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***Things to Make and Do***
***Chad Robertson***
***Cobrasnake***

This season WeSC invites you to imagine a world where craftiness is king.
A chalet where hastiness is traded for hobby, and the day-to-day talents of your friends are known and appreciated. Here the world moves at a slower pace.
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## EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

DF

AB

JN

DT

**DAVID FISCHER** David is a mushroom expert, an author, and a really FUN GUY. Get it—fungi? Hey-yo! I bet he's never heard that one before. Anyway, David performs an educational multimedia show called the Wild Musical Mushroom Show, which involves beautiful slide shows, original music, and an epic poem entitled "Don't Call Them Toadstools." His website, Americanmushrooms.com, contains a plethora of engrossing 'shroom info (a whole section on their smells!) and he happily drove down from upstate NY to traipse through Central Park with us searching for mushrooms. Surprisingly there were a lot!

*See* LET'S GO ON A MUSHROOM HUNT!, *page 101.*

**ANGELA BOATWRIGHT** Angela is an excellent photographer and an obsessive heavy-metal fan. When she gets drunk two things will inevitably happen: She will smash a bottle and she will yell at you about how Metallica totally ripped off Diamond Head. She'll be near tears, shouting, "Lars Ulrich was just a rich kid and a thief!"—and you can practically feel her wrath. Other than that she's totally on point. We sent her on a mushroom quest with our mycologist chaperone (see above) and a bunch of bewildered models, and look at the lovely photos she got us.

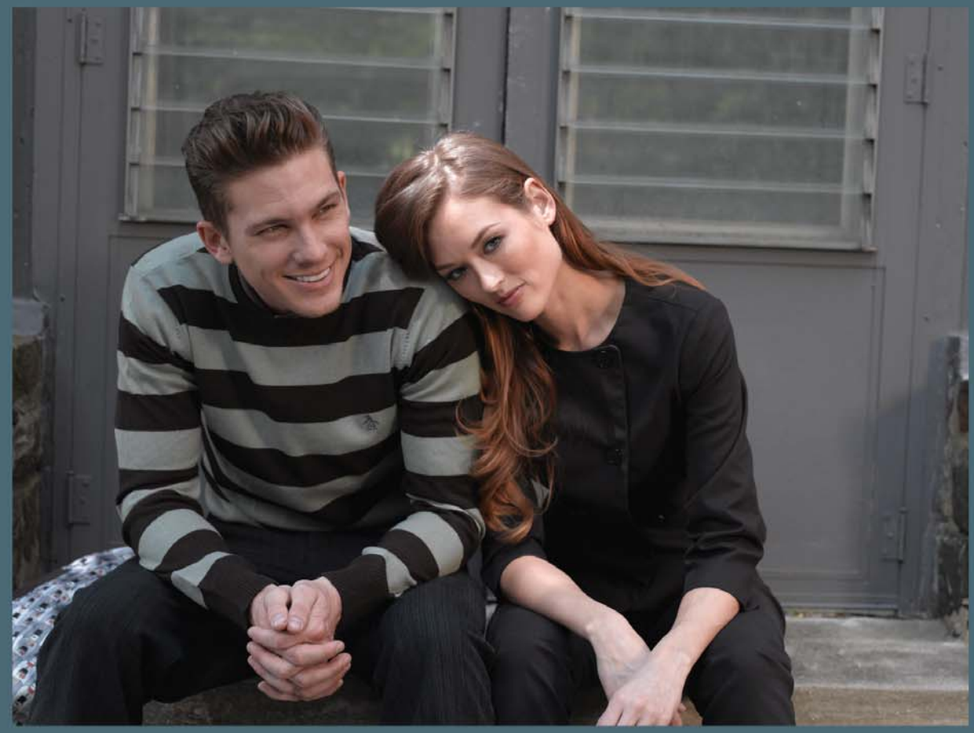
*See* LET'S GO ON A MUSHROOM HUNT!, *page 101.*

**JASON NOCITO** Jason was up in a three-story-high cherry picker for three hours during the Boredoms' Boadrum77 concert. It was scary up there. Every tiny movement would make the whole thing sway and jerk around. Imagine trying to keep still long enough to get a good crisp photograph. Somehow he managed and we're really jazzed to be able to see what the greatest show we've ever been to looked like from the sky. Oh, and did he pee in a bottle while he was up there, you ask? You bet he did!

*See* DRUM DREAM, *page 96.*

**DEANNA TEMPLETON** Deanna Templeton is an awesome photographer who has been publishing a series of homemade zines of her work, collectively entitled *Blue Kitten*, for the last five years. Now she's just had her first book published. It's called *Your Logo Here*, and it's 32 pages of lush, observant, and witty black-and-white photographs (seven of which you can see in this issue) with a short essay by her husband, photographer and pro skater Ed Templeton. Deanna lives and works in sunny Huntington Beach, California.

*See* YOUR LOGO HERE (AND HERE, AND HERE, AND HERE), *page 75.*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## A BURNING NEED TO KNOW

Dear *Vice* Team,

We need the answers of the "I've Got a Match: Your Face and My Ass" puzzle from the 2007 Photo Issue (Volume 14 Number 7).

Thanks,
F. DORAIS

**Dear Ass Lover: They are online at viceland.com.**

## WHY US?

Dear *Vice*,

It seems that most of the world feels a superiority toward US Americans or culture. People here called me spic, our government calls them aliens—get over it! Ninety-nine percent of my friends have died from AIDS, or would have, but died from something else first.

When you are negative, the CDC tells the general public, safe sex is kissing, oral, or anal with condom. Become positive and visit the nurse practitioner 20 years later, she tells you something crazy like chances are 1,000 percent to transmit HIV orally, 9,000 percent with condom (rough figures) but gives no documentation.

Being positive you are discouraged from receiving help through AIDS groups for rent, food, or utilities unless you're on HIV meds. You are considered a health risk to yourself.

My brother used my identity 39 times, my sister tells all her friends my status, I've served prison time, been raped three times, fatal attraction sliced my face (36 stitches), had my lip bitten through, was mentally and physically assaulted by my dad (parents dead), porn pictures at age 16, etc, etc…

I'm truly content staying home alone, "because I don't need friends to do bad by because I can do bad all by myself." God takes care of my friends and my enemies (my quote). Just waiting for that asteroid (the size of the Rose Bowl) to hit the earth after 04-13-2035 (NOVA).

Ugly, vicious, or non-Americans have it so easy.

Sincerely,
FRANKLIN VEGA
*Denver, CO*

**Frankly, Franklin (ha ha ha) you sound like our kind of fella. But do you realize who you sent this letter to? Or, to clarify, why in the fuck did you send this letter to *Vice*? Oh wait, is it because you're nuts? OK then. Fair play, mate.**

## SLANGUAGE BAN GOING JUST FINE…

Dear *Vice*,

Thanks. The article on slang/abbreviating made me very happy. Now I know that I'm not the only one who reacts to the term "BFF" by wanting to stab the moron who said it with a Big Fucking Fork.

Your magazine is great and thanks again,
VIRGINIA FOURNIER
*Calgary, AB*

## OH SHIT, WAIT A SECOND…

Yo *Vice*! 'Sup?

I really dig yer shizzles! You make me laugh a lot. Hecka lots! Anyhoo, I don't think we should stop with the slang. That would be a total douche maneuv! What's next? Wearing ball caps straight? Only one belt? Using it to actually hold your pants up? Shaving off the silly 70s 'stache? So long to neck tattoos? No thank you! Slang is a blessing in disguise… the evolution and de-evolution of language at the same time.

Peace ups, y'all!
THE NORG
*Seattle, WA*

**Sorry, but we just think people should stop sounding like valley girl robots with fifth-grade educations. Totes sue us in charge!**

## PROGRESS

Hi,

I just noticed that on the world map on your webpage all of the countries that have *Vice* in them are First-World. Are you afraid of starting up *Vice* Mexico or *Vice* Brazil for some reason or other?
PAUL GARCIA-LOZANO
*Via email*

**Isn't it weird that Mexico and Brazil are still the Third World? It's true that they were dropped in that class during the Cold War (aka a million years ago), and that the whole concept of First, Second, Third, and Fourth Worlds is goofy, but seriously, still? Now? What the fuck is wrong with this planet? Can we not take care of this shit? Oh sorry, anyway yeah, we've been talking to some people about doing *Vice* in both of those countries and one day we probably will.**

## PILE OF PUKE

Dear *Vice*,

At some afternoon time today, I slowly began to stir from hazy dreams, attempting to separate my newfound reality from the images of two busty females sitting in my shower giving each other enemas, grinning at me with smiles that said everything was copasetic. Dry mouth. Throbbing head. Bladder about to erupt a fire-hose stream of urine through my cock. My brain wrestles with clues it should know all too well by now.

Where am I? In my bed.

Why are two hot girls pumping shit out of their assholes? I was dreaming.

What causes a dry mouth? Dehydration.

How does one become dehydrated? From spending $102.75 on shitty well whiskey at some dive bar the night before.

Socrates himself would of [*sic*] been proud as I moved my limited knowledge of these events to a deeper awareness and understanding: Last night was a shit show, my hangover today is going to blow harder than a fag on an asshole, I have to piss badly, and my dreams are teetering on the edge of requiring psychoanalysis.

For a large portion of today I sat in the living room contemplating my existence with the shades drawn and cursing drinking until this little fact dawned on me: Drunken reverie is a cornerstone of my existence. If I didn't incorporate it into my life I'd still spend a large portion of my days sitting at home with the shades drawn, only I'd watch some watery American reality-TV show, rub one (two, three, or four) down, and fall asleep as a puddle of moisturizer spilled onto the couch.

Reacquainted with a feeling of self-worth I picked up a copy of *Vice* magazine I'd seen sitting on our coffee table for some time. The Drug Issue. Wow. Love the writing style. Higgins's article on cutting was very well drafted. Loved Grain's choice of a Canadian farmer for a test subject. Vito's "Blacks vs. Whites" article lacked even an inkling of scientific basis and was almost as pretentious as Arfin's recovery ABCs, but still was wilding entertaining. So how do I get a gig with you guys?

Sincerly,
ZACH
*Via email*

**Oh, you're one of those guys who thinks that because you get drunk and "ruminate" a little, you're a gonzo journalist. For the record: Not only do we hate gonzo journalism, but it also doesn't exist. Can you believe that? We hate something that doesn't even exist! Seriously though, the only way for you to get a gig with us is to be the opposite person of who you are right now.**

---

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## THIRD-WORLD GANG BISCUITS FOR KIDS

These wheat biscuits were made in Mumbai. Guess which coast of India Mumbai is on. That's right. West Si-i-i-i-y-eeeed represent!

*Thanks to Nana, Kyoto, Japan*

## OLDEN TITS

Boobies used to have this weird, turgid rocket shape that made them look like exotic fruits, then Gloria Steinem burned all the wire bras and all the tits went flat. Now they're swinging the boulder-holder pendulum the other way with massive fake balloons that look like they're going to pop. Can we please go back to the 60s tit, please?

## COCAINE VASE

Remember that story a few years ago where two presumably wasted British burglars saw an urn marked "Charlie" in an old lady's house and snorted its contents? It was her dog, a Newfoundland named Charlie. When we heard that we were like, "Who the fuck keeps a huge vase full of cocaine in their house anyway?" Lots of people, apparently.

*Thanks to Sara Gessin, Los Angeles, CA, but why the fuck did you not buy it? Are you insane?*

## PARENT TRAPS

Dear teens,
Your parents have noticed it's near impossible to make you clean your teeth and do the dishes, so they've tried to make it cool by saying, "Hey man, why don't you go Oxy-blast some zits off those fucking plates?" or "Dude, if you're jonesing for a smoke why don't you go brush one on?" Do not get duped. It's a trick.

*Thanks for the warning Victoria, Philadelphia, PA, and Matt, Glens Falls, NY*

## ALIEN MASK

Whenever the news talks to illegal aliens about Bush's amnesty plan they hide the guy's face with some kind of overlit backdrop. If they used this instead I would get a CNN tattoo.

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9/16 - Minneapolis, First Ave.
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9/19 - Cleveland, Grog Shop
9/21 - Baltimore, Ottobar
9/22 - Providence, Living Room
9/23 - Boston, Middle East
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10/14 - Albq. NM, Sunshine Theater
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10/18 - Denver, Cervantes
10/19 - Boulder, Fox Theater
10/20 - Ft. Collins, Aggie Theater
10/22 - Salt Lake City, In The Venue
10/25 - Portland, Wonder Ballroom
10/26 - Vancouver, Commodors
10/27 - Bellingham, Nightlight
10/28 - Seattle, Showbox
10/30 - Eugene, Wow Hall
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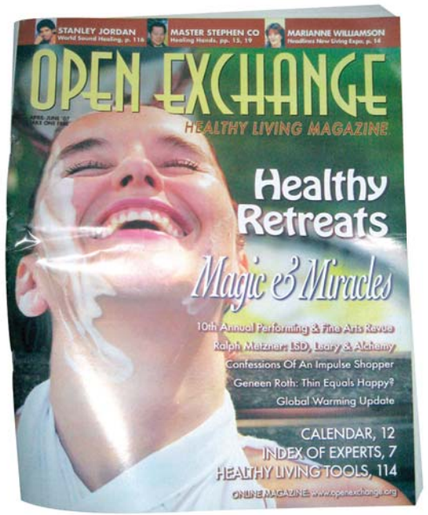
**TIDBITS** (A MONTHLY LOOK AT THE THINGS WE LOVE)




## NAÏVE HIPPIE MAGAZINES

Are hippies blind? Do they know what this looks like, or are they so used to ejaculating inside their free-loving and hirsute fuck-buddies they forgot the rest of us still enjoy the odd pearl goalie mask? Thank god they stopped doing kids' shows. Who knows what kind of inadvertent porn they'd end up subjecting our children to?

*Thanks to Joey, Berkeley, CA*

## TWINKIES

Middle-aged queers refer to young hotties as twinkies (or twinks, for short) because they're not good for you but they're full of cream and they look cute. As said old gays get past troll age, the only time you hear about them getting a twinkie up their ass is when they're in the ER having this guy dislodged after "accidentally sitting on it in the shower" (yeah right, you guys).

## CEREAL MILK JUICE

You know when you're done with your Fruity Pebbles and you drink the bottom of the bowl and you go, "They should make this into a drink"? Well, you forgot about it immediately after because it's a fucking retarded idea. Others were not so lucky.

## THIS MONTH'S WINNER: THIRD-WORLD GANG BISCUITS FOR KIDS

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**THIS PAGE:**
- ROB PRUITT
- MICHELE O'MARAH

*Read about the bravest journalists in the world on page 52.*

*Beware the Destroying Angel mush-room on page 110.*

*Drum up some fun with the Boredoms on page 96.*

# STUFF LIKE THAT

*"The unicorn looks like it's perched at the edge of a pink cliff under a big weird moon."*

## She Was Born to Be My Unicorn

*Vice*'s own Amy Kellner (aka Teenageunicorn.com) curated an amazing group show last month at Smith-Stewart Gallery in New York. She's too modest to write this intro herself, so before she goes ahead and tells you about a few of the art-works included, we want to say that it was the best show we've seen in a year and that it was also a shining beacon of niceness in an often turd-clogged art world. Take it away, Amy McHumble...

**Right: Rob Pruitt, *Under the Cherry Moon*, 2007,** acrylic and oil on foil panel, approx. 36" x 30". This is a piece from Rob's last show at Gavin Brown's, where these silver and pink splatter paintings covered the walls, surrounding sculptures made from denim jeans filled with cement. Rob is so awesome that he customized this one for me by putting a tiny iridescent-pink unicorn sticker in the middle there. Can you see it? The unicorn looks like it's perched at the edge of a pink cliff under a big weird moon.

**Below: Michele O'Marah, *Suzie's Rainbow, This Is Not a Devo Poster, Stop Sign (Skip's Room)*, 2002,** construction paper and Sharpie marker mounted on Sintra, dimensions variable. These are props from *Valley Girl*, Michele's art film in which she remade the 1983 teen movie *Valley Girl* in its entirety, but in this really minimal and stylized way with friends as actors, sets made of construction paper, and songs rerecorded in a fuzzy, lo-fi style. Personally, I like it even better than the original. It's funnier for one thing, but it's also fascinating to see a kitschy movie become an art performance.

*Rob Pruitt image courtesy of the artist and Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York; Michele O'Marah images courtesy of the artist and Sister, Los Angeles*



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**THIS PAGE:**
- ASSUME VIVID ASTRO FOCUS
- JIM KREWSON

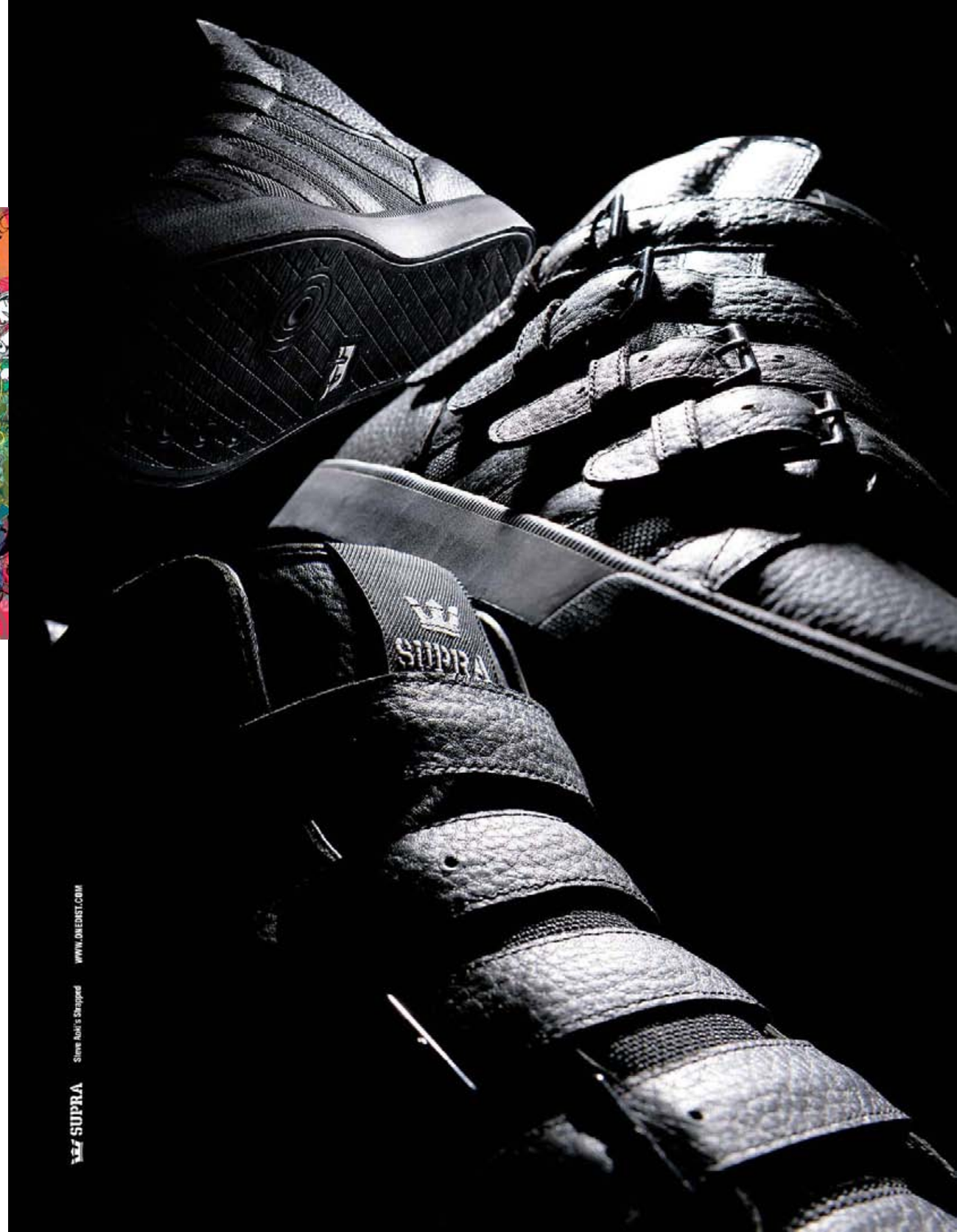
*"One of the pods explodes and somehow fuses a banjo-playing hobo's head onto the body of a dog."*

**Top: assume vivid astro focus, *Butch Queen 5 (LeSportsac)*, 2005,** lithograph, hi-fi print, 17 1/2" x 40". I saw this print peeking out from under some other stuff in Eli's studio and immediately said, "Ooh, I want that one!" He laughed and said that he wasn't even gonna suggest this one because it's the print that he used for the bags he designed for LeSportsac last year. But I love LeSportsac! I have about 20 LeSportsac purses. So that made me like it even more. It's like a hundred drawings piled on top of each other and they're all so fun to look at it makes my eyes confused.

**Right: Jim Krewson, *Untitled (John and Yoko)*, 2006,** acrylic on canvas, 48" x 52". We've told you a billion times that Jim is the best artist of all time. Do you believe us yet? Jim says his inspiration for this painting was the scene in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (the Donald Sutherland one) where one of the pods explodes and somehow fuses a banjo-playing hobo's head onto a dog's body. I haven't seen that movie but now I want to.

*assume vivid astro focus image courtesy of John Connelly Presents, New York; Jim Krewson image courtesy of the artist*





**THIS PAGE:**
- DANA CARLSON
- MARLENE MCCARTY

*"I kept asking myself if this was the dumbest thing I had ever made and how could I make it more dumb."*

Dana Carlson image courtesy of the artist; Marlene McCarty image courtesy of Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

**Left: Dana Carlson, *What Cats Think About*, 2006,** embroidery, beadwork, applique, and paint on peach satin, 25" x 32". Dana told me, "When I was working on this painting I kept asking myself if this was the dumbest thing that I had ever made and how could I make it more dumb"—which is exactly why it's so great. Extreme cutesiness is hilarious. It's got puffy-paint rainbows, mini pom-poms, rhinestones, glitter, little pink bows, and a dazed-looking embroidered cat looking down from the heavens. There's a pineapple in the tree too. That's all you basically need, like, ever.

**Below: Marlene McCarty, *Anointed: Beeville, Texas*, 2007**, graphite, ballpoint, and watercolor on paper, 35" x 55". Marlene makes huge portraits using pencils and ballpoint pens, which, as you can imagine, takes forever. She used to draw teenage girls who had committed murder, but now she's doing a new series of children praying based on photos from Christian evangelical children's prayer groups—like the group in that movie *Jesus Camp*, where they brainwash kids to worship President Bush and to kill for Christ. Oh, she also always draws their clothing see-through, which gives it that extra bit of creepiness.

Photo by Stephen Wilde **Oakland California**

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# Anti-Socials

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY ALEX STURROCK

Last year I traveled up and down Britain for six months to meet and take photographs of people with Anti-Social Behavior Orders. In case you didn't know, an ASBO is something invented by the Labor government to give out to people who are seen as a menace to the community they live in. I decided to do this because at the time there was so much coverage of things like "chavs" and "ASBOs" in the tabloid press that I wanted to find out what life was really like for the people who'd been labeled "antisocial" by the government. Originally, only a limited number of ASBOs were meant to be handed out and only under very special circumstances. Once they started making front-page headlines, however, the government began chucking them out like they were lottery tickets. When I began my project, over 9,853 people had ASBOs. At one point the rate of increase was so dramatic that if it had continued most of the country would have had their own personal ASBO by the end of the decade. I wonder what mine would have been for?

*Carl Wareham, 20, received a five-year order banning him from entering the village of Lytchett Matravers. He is also banned from the local pubs and off-licenses. He told me that although he was a serial offender when he was young, he received his ASBO after being the subject of only two minor charges over a period of several years.*

*Billy is from Dagenham in Essex. He has an ASBO for hoarding rubbish and livestock in his house. When the council cleaned his house they removed over 20 tons of trash in 700 garbage bags.*

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*Adam Rooney, 20, told me he had only ever had two minor charges against him before he and his twin brother, Liam, were given ASBOs. Liam is now in prison for breaching his ASBO and Adam's picture is on the back of buses on three local bus routes. Adam now finds it impossible to get a job. I arranged another meeting with Adam after I took this picture, but when I arrived I found out he was in custody again.*



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*Bobby, 13, left, and Craig, 11, right, pictured with their mother and sister. After both boys received ASBOs, Craig made the front page of the local paper and leaflets were distributed with his name and face on them. Craig now finds himself on the receiving end of threats and abuse from adults in the street.*

# GENIUS CONVENT ION

## *Fun in the Sun With the War on Terror's Good Guys*

TEXT AND PICTURES BY JON FOX

The emblem for the FBI's Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate features a screaming bald eagle soaring somewhere in the stratosphere, high above the earth where there probably, technically, isn't much air to soar on. In the background, draped across space, is a huge American flag. The eagle, its talons poised somewhere above, let's say, Michigan and Montana, is clutching symbols that represent every kind of WMD.

There's the interlocking ellipses of the atom symbol, the propeller of the radiation warning sign, the universal biohazard symbol, and a bright red beaker that presumably means "chemical weapons."

In June, the FBI hoisted that banner high over Miami when it threw the first ever Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism Law Enforcement Conference. It had been roughly a year since presidents George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin announced the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism on the sidelines of the G-8 summit in St. Petersburg, Russia. In trumpeting their bilateral partnership, they hoped to spur a greater degree of international cooperation to prevent a nonstate actor (that's a fancy word for terrorist) from perpetrating a rogue nuclear attack, which everyone pretty much agrees would rank up there as one of the worst things to ever happen.

The Global Initiative began as just Russia and the United States, but since then more than 50 nations have signed on. Just how much multilateral cooperation is really going on is still slightly opaque, though. At the most basic level, they've all agreed, in principle, that nuclear terrorism sucks and should be prevented. That's certainly a good foundation, but what's the next step in preventing an atomic attack on freedom?

It's obvious. A government-funded trip to sunny South Florida where the good times never stop. Hence my first sighting of the aforementioned screaming eagle, which was on the cover of the conference program I got when I arrived in Miami to report on the week-long law enforcement event.

As business trips go, it was one of the more bizarre ones I've been on—and my employer has sent me to Moscow *and* Staten Island. It was a solid week of talks about improvised nuclear weapons and dirty bombs turning New York City into an abandoned radioactive wasteland. But then there were also the police-escorted party buses to South Beach and a trip to the Orange Bowl where an FBI SWAT team fake killed fake terrorists with real paintball guns. They then defused a fake bomb with something that looked remarkably like Johnny Five from *Short Circuit*. I watched the whole thing from the stadium stands while drinking government-issue water. Then everyone partied some more.

But let's begin at the beginning… After getting my press badge early Monday morning, less than an hour after my 6 AM flight from Washington touched down, I stumbled into an enormous, darkened conference room in Miami. There was rousing, epic music playing and about 400 police officers, FBI agents, U.S. government officials, and foreign defense ministry representatives listening to a golden-tongued MC talking about how seriously fucked up nuclear terrorism is. Then he shot it straight over to center stage for a full-blown opera version of the national anthem belted out by a guy in a police uniform. It was sort of like *Team America* but without puppets.

After a video link to a sister nuclear terrorism conference in Kazakhstan, a speech from the director of the FBI, and some comments from a member of the Russian FSB (which used to be the KGB), a nuclear scientist working with the Homeland Security Department took the stage and said that terrorists would probably be totally happy with a nuclear device going off with the equivalent force of 100 tons of dynamite—less than 1/100th the power of the

bomb we blew up over Hiroshima. It would still wreak some incredible destruction, he promised.

But that's assuming the terrorists could scrape together the fissile material—the uranium or plutonium that remains impossible for a terrorist group to produce on its own. Once they get that, building a bomb is within the realm of possibility.

"It's not trivial but, as the intelligence community has said, it's not an insurmountable task," he said.

Then they opened it up to questions.

There were hundreds of officials, and no one raised their hands. Was this room full of experts and dignitaries really not going to come up with a couple of queries? He asked one last time if there were any questions, and finally I stood up. (Oh by the way, I was the only reporter in the cordoned-off press area. These things aren't exactly widely covered.)

I asked just how likely the Homeland Security Department thinks it is that a terrorist group would pack a nuclear bomb inside a shipping container and send it stateside. While members of Congress continue to call for 100-percent radiation scanning of shipping containers, some in the domestic-security sector are beginning to suggest that it would be an unlikely way to deliver a nuclear bomb.

***Rather than worrying so much about shipping containers, people, especially in cities, should be concerned about the vans or trucks that could blend with the crush of traffic and convey a dirty bomb, he said. "That's the delivery vehicle we're worried about most."***

"Giving up a nuclear device, putting it in a container and letting it float around the world for a couple of weeks is probably folly," the head of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office said earlier this year while discussing the threat.

The Homeland Security Department wants to spend more than $1 billion to install next-generation radiation detectors at the nation's ports, and I was essentially asking if he thought it was worth the expenditure given the perceived threat.

The scientist in Miami dutifully failed to answer my question, and I sat back down.

Apparently I made a mistake in even asking the question. Reporters weren't supposed to speak. Who'd have known? I mean, that's what they pay us to do. Yet here it was, mid morning, day one, and I had apparently already angered the FBI organizers and come close to losing my credentials, according to a conversation I later had with a special agent. He looked like some 1950s cartoon drawing of an archetypal American—all blond, straight nosed, and square jawed. Johnny Unitas with Special Ops training, basically. Hadn't I been "briefed" on the protocol, he asked?

We were both in the elevator, me on my way up to my room on the 34th floor of the hotel.

No, no briefing, I said. All I got was my picture on an orange press badge and an agenda.

"Well, if it was up to me," he said, "I would have pulled your credentials." It was hard to tell if he was joking.

Later that afternoon, I wandered around the vendor area outside the conference room. There were people eagerly trying to sell radiation detectors, software that tracks internet usage, and radiation-exposure triage kits. More than one booth was hawking some sort of fancy overhead projector. Exactly what these projectors had to do with terrorism remains unclear to me, but it was at this point it that I began to see one of the true purposes of this conference: selling all kinds of crap to local law-enforcement authorities so that they can feel like they're going to be ready if terrorists somehow get radiological on their hometowns. It's pretty much the present-day equivalent of 1950s duck-and-cover drills in grade schools and backyard bomb shelters.

In one stall, a man was trying to drum up interest in a $15,000 remote-control truck capable of pulling a trailer to set a charge near a suspected improvised explosive device. The idea was that the truck could blow up a homemade landmine before it blows up an army Humvee. Again, exactly what this had to do with nuclear terrorism is not entirely clear. As far as I know, insurgents in Iraq haven't got any plutonium to pack into their IEDs. I'm also not entirely sure why it cost $15,000 considering it looked like pretty run-of-the-mill hobby store fare, except it was painted stealth black and had a swiveling camera stuck on it.

It seems the conventioneers were less than impressed as well. As I was checking my email that afternoon at some computers set up next to the conference room, the remote-control truck crept by my feet. In its miniature pick-up bed was a handwritten sign in ballpoint pen that said, "Follow me to booth 35."

The truck rolled past me and toward the doors of a conference hall that vendors were prohibited from entering. An FBI guy in a suit began to chastise the truck as if it were a person.

"You can't go in there. You have to stay in the vendor area," he said, slightly stooped over, directing his admonishments to the tiny camera on the front of the truck.

A man with a huge remote control panel strapped around his neck turned a nearby corner, apologized, and drove the little truck away.

At another stall, I talked to a young vendor who was selling anti-chemical weapon medical supplies. On the round table in front of him was an array of plastic tubes about the size of magic markers. They were atropine self-injectors minus the atropine and the syringe. They were self-injection training cartridges. Good if you get dosed with simulation nerve gas, I guess.

He let me have one.

"Step 1: Pull off gray safety release."

"Step 2: Swing and firmly push green tip against outer thigh so it 'clicks.' Hold against thigh approximately ten seconds."

I did this until my technique became exceptional. The next time I'm dosed with nerve gas, I'm going to be on it so fast the terrorists' heads will spin.

ON THE CONFERENCE'S SECOND DAY, RICHARD Falkenrath, a former homeland security advisor to President Bush and now head of the New York City Police Department's counterterrorism division, suggested that the intense focus on scanning the seabound shipping containers is misplaced.

"It seems to me that Washington is fixated on one particular delivery system—international shipping containers—for reasons I don't fully understand," he said.

He was, in a way, answering the question I couldn't get answered the day before. He was also arguing that a $40 million initiative to ring New York City with radiation detector equipment shouldn't be sliced in half as Congress had just proposed.

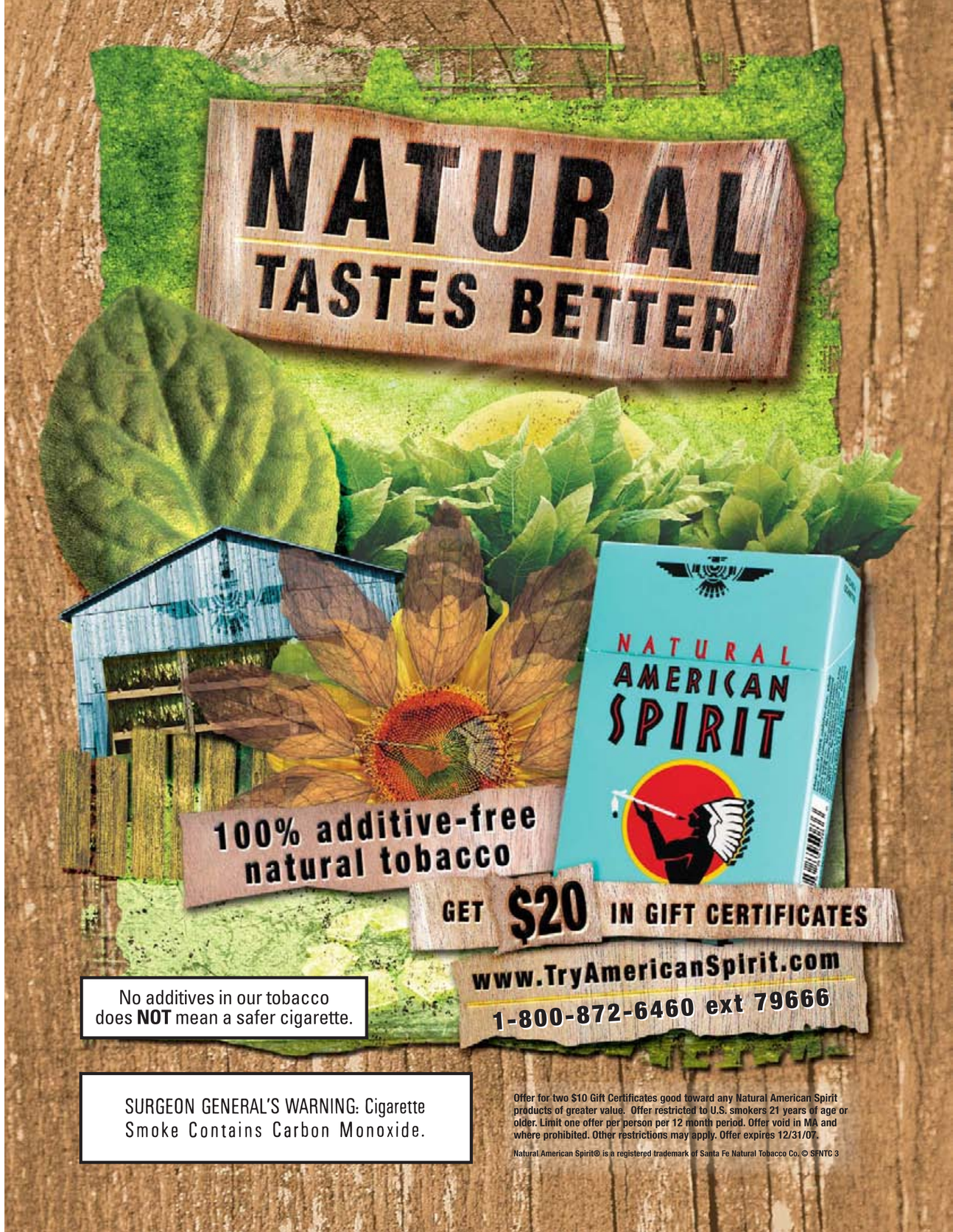
Rather than worrying so much about shipping containers, people, especially in cities, should be concerned about the vans or trucks that could blend with the crush of traffic and convey a dirty bomb, he said. "That's the delivery vehicle we're worried about most."

In a dense city like New York, such an attack could be "potentially catastrophic," he said. While it wouldn't have as great of consequences as an improvised nuclear attack, it is certainly much more likely, he said.

A dirty bomb packed with the radioactive alkali metal Cesium 137 may not kill a large number of people—perhaps no more than a conventional bomb attack—but it could render swaths of the city uninhabitable due to unacceptably high levels of radiation.

The isotope could actually bond with concrete and buildings. "You can't just rinse it off. You have to tear it down and rebuild it," he said. It would be a "nightmare scenario."

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AFTER A DAY OF TALKS LIKE THIS THE FBI WAS HAPPY TO shuttle us all over to South Beach to enjoy the bustle of the tourist strip. Perhaps it was done as a courtesy, eliminating the need for a $25 cab, or maybe it was a security measure for the scientists and law-enforcement people enjoying the incredible humidity of a South Florida June, but each night at eight and then again at nine, two buses would leave the hotel for the beach. With a full retinue of Miami motorcycle cops leading the way, we sped through red lights as even more cops blocked intersections and stopped traffic.

Some bystanders smiled at the buses' tinted windows, more or less everyone stared, and I saw one woman give us the slowly rotating wrist and cupped palm of the British royal wave.

Then at 11 and again at midnight the buses and motorcycle escorts would return to hump us all back to the hotel. That first night, as I climbed onto the 11 o'clock bus, a woman from some Eastern European nation's defense department posed in front of one of the jack-booted police officers as a colleague took a photo.

On the ride back I sat next to a terrorism consultant from Romania and made small talk.

THE NEXT DAY, I APPROACHED ONE OF THE VENDOR booths where two guys sat reading the newspaper next to a mannequin in a black radiation suit. For about $1,000 the whole get-up could be yours and you'd be pretty much OK in the event of a dirty bomb going off down the block, they said. They offered to let me try on what felt like a very heavy wetsuit.

So this is good against a dirty bomb, but let's say a nuclear bomb goes off on the other side of the city and you didn't happen to die in the initial blast. Will this do anything to protect me from that radiation? I asked.

"You're pretty much screwed then," the bigger of the two guys said. Boots, gloves, and respirator are sold separately. I was assured I could get them relatively cheap.

On Wednesday, everyone was bused over to the Orange Bowl (again with the motorcade) to watch what turned out to be an underwhelming demonstration of a simulated response to a simulated dirty bomb in a simulated warehouse. An assault team repelled from a Blackhawk helicopter behind a nearby grove of palm trees. Apparently they had planned to have the SWAT team drop right into the stadium, but the rotor wash from the copter would have knocked down all the mesh partitions that were standing in for warehouse walls. Once the would-be terrorist bombers were neutralized with paintball assault rifles, the bomb squad brought in a rickety-looking robot [pictured above] to shoot a small metal box with some water that had been packed inside shotgun shells.

And voila, in a burst of *agua* the box was pushed off a table and the firing circuits in the device were dislodged! Simulated crisis averted! The crowd erupted in riotous cheers. (Just kidding. Nobody said anything.)

ON MY LAST NIGHT IN MIAMI, I TOOK THE PARTY BUS BACK into South Beach. By 10 PM I was in Mango's Tropical Café. Waitresses in skin-tight, animal-print pantsuits were taking turns getting up and halfheartedly dancing on a horseshoe-shaped bar in the middle of the club. The place was filled with FBI agents in shorts, untucked shirts, and unwaveringly sober haircuts. There were U.S. government officials and foreign representatives. There was the guy who had given a lengthy and mind-numbing PowerPoint presentation earlier in the day. He was eating dinner at a table a few feet away from a woman shimmying on top of the makeshift stage. One of the FBI's joint terrorism task forces from a northeastern city was milling around near the entrance. Even closer to the stage was a table full of Bulgarians—three men joylessly chain smoking and one woman. They weren't talking and didn't seem to be watching the show until a bouncer lifted the female dancer down off the bar and three men got up on stage and began a coordinated dance routine that ended with bare male chests. The Bulgarians turned to look and were apparently displeased. They left shortly thereafter.

The dancing waitresses in their remarkable pantsuits resumed their turns on the bar stage, and I spent my last night in Miami drinking beer with a guy who had "top secret" security clearance, shoulder-to-shoulder with G-men. I can only hope the FBI is already working on next year's conference, in Las Vegas perhaps. The brighter our lights shine the more the terorists hate us. Dance, girls, dance!

JON FOX

# OUR HERO

## Robert Fisk Is a Journalistic God

Photo by Katia Jarjoura

Best-selling author and British journalist Robert Fisk has lived in Beirut for the past three decades. He is the Middle East correspondent for *The Independent* and holds more British and international journalism awards than any other foreign correspondent. He has covered every major event in the region including the Algerian civil war, the Iranian Revolution, the American hostage crisis in Beirut, the Iran-Iraq war, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, and the American invasion of Iraq.

His most recent book, *The Great War for Civilization*, is a 1,300-page epic eyewitness account of Middle Eastern history, and a best seller in the UK. It's been translated into eight languages.

In short, there aren't many better guys than Robert Fisk to talk to at a time like, oh, right fucking now.

**Vice: Has reporting changed a lot since you started 30 years ago?**

**Robert Fisk:** Oh yes! Hugely. Technologically, we had no mobiles, no satellite dishes; we had to write on telex machines. I still have one at home. I even did a two-year course in Dublin on how to repair telex machines. Later, I was in Kabul in 1980 during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and my type machine wouldn't print the letter *a*. I could repair it and I was still able to send my report on time. Years later, in 1993, I went to Bosnia and I was trying to send a piece by satellite but a signal on my computer just kept saying: "Total disk failure." I didn't know how to repair that!

**And how has this change affected journalism?**

In my sense, the bigger and more sophisticated the machine became, the weaker journalism became politically. Journalists are no longer independent. They have the technical abilities to do their work, but they are bound to the multinational corporations who back them financially. They also have to deal with local institutions in order to be able to broadcast on foreign grounds. For example, during the Balkans conflict, TV crews had to make a deal with the Serbian government in order to bring their communication systems into the area. Ultimately, this type of agreement influences the truth. If you agree to "cooperate," you lose your freedom to report both sides of the story accurately. Reporting has become garbage because there is no more street-reporting like what a few of us did the first day we went up to Tripoli: watch a real gun street battle in the heart of the city, without being bothered by the security forces.

**Have you mostly been welcomed by the local people in the countries you've covered?**

Yes, I've been welcomed because people in the Middle East have an open view of foreigners. It's a Muslim tradition. I have been in the poorest part of Pakistan where they've never seen a Westerner before and their first reaction was to bring me into their house and offer me coffee. People there today are less trusting of foreigners and more frightened because of the "war on terror"—a phrase that I hate—but not with me, especially if they know my name. They treat me really carefully and with great courtesy. I went to Tripoli recently and people recognized me because their children read my articles on the internet and they trusted my views.

**Has the Middle East become a more dangerous place for reporters?**

Absolutely, 120 percent. You cannot travel freely anymore as a reporter in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, the Palestinian occupied territories, and many other places. I can recall when, according to my own experience, journalists lost their immunity. It was in Lebanon, in 1983, during the civil war. American warships were shelling the Chouf Mountains. I was with Terry Anderson in a car and we were stopped at a Palestinian checkpoint. When Terry showed his press card, the gunman threw it on the ground. He didn't care that we were journalists. I remember picking it up and looking at Terry. His eyes were saying: "We lost our protection." Within 12 months, Terry was taken hostage by the Shia militias and kept for seven years.

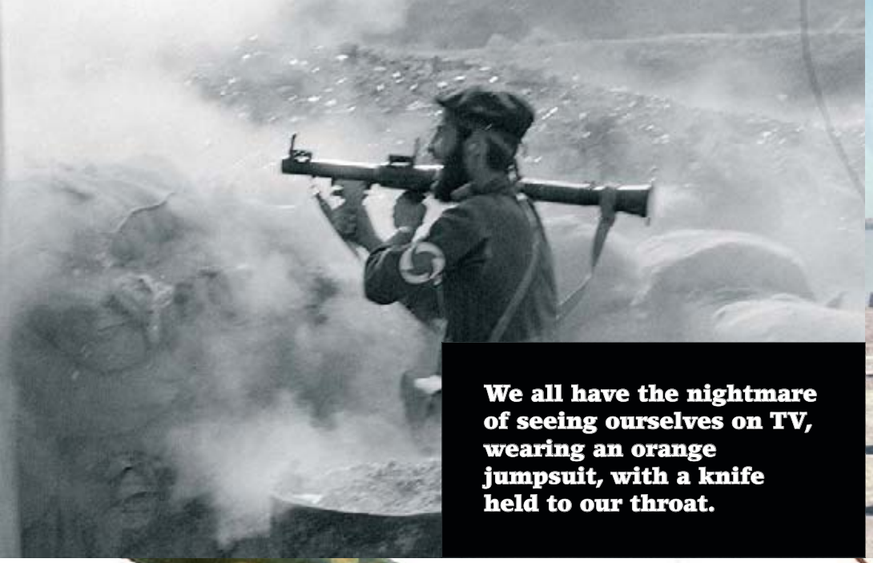
Today, reporting in the Middle East is all about racial differences and the war against the West. When I go to Afghanistan, with my fair skin and blue eyes, it's impossible to hide who I am and where I come from. But if you never take risks, you'll get nowhere. One day, during the first Gulf War, I said to a young Irish reporter who was asking me if she should go or not, "You are not going to die! You are going to report." Of course, some journalists do die, but so few of them. The people who live in war-torn countries, they are in danger. They die by the thousands.

**You were badly wounded in Afghanistan. How did it happen?**

It was in November 2001. I was on my way to Kandahar and my car broke down in a village near the Pakistani border. There happened to be a bunch of people there who had just fled Kandahar the night before because of a B-52 air strike. Many of them had lost family members in the shelling. They were bitterly furious. When they saw this Westerner—me—a little boy said, "Is this George Bush?" and a group of children started throwing small stones at me. I was with a colleague. On the other side of the road, we saw a bus. The driver signaled us to get in, which my colleague did. But before I could get on, the kids grabbed my satchel and pulled me out. They started banging my face and head with stones. I really thought I was about to die. I remember thinking, "How long does it take to die?" When I recall the smell of my blood falling down my face, I think about that quote from Lady Macbeth: "Who would have thought the old man had so much blood in him." I came close to fainting, but then I remembered what a Lebanese man had told me during their civil war: "If you're in danger, the worst thing you can do is nothing!" So I defended myself. I started punching. Finally, an imam pulled me from the crowd, took me by the arm, and led me to safety.

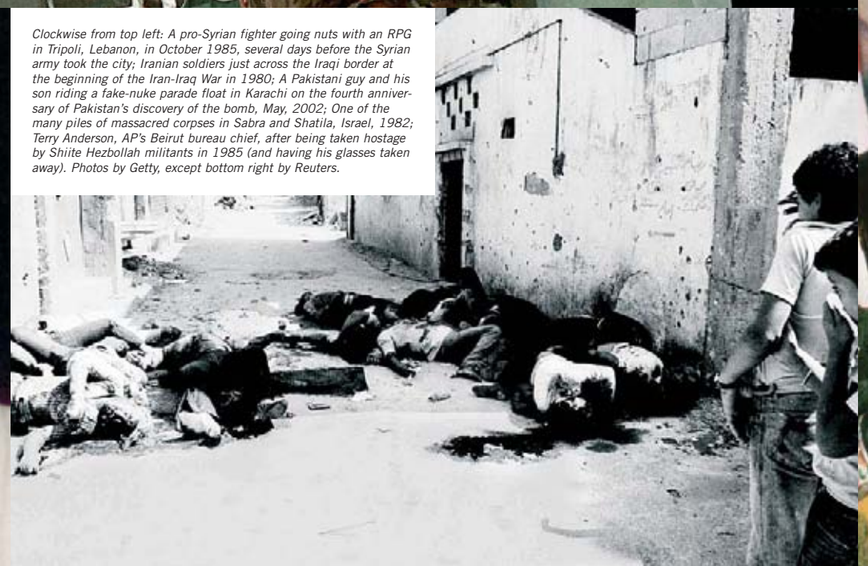
**You've been to Iraq may times after the fall of Saddam. Haven't you ever been afraid of being kidnapped?**

Of course. We all have the nightmare of seeing ourselves on TV wearing an orange



**We all have the nightmare of seeing ourselves on TV, wearing an orange jumpsuit, with a knife held to our throat.**

*Clockwise from top left: A pro-Syrian fighter going nuts with an RPG in Tripoli, Lebanon, in October 1985, several days before the Syrian army took the city; Iranian soldiers just across the Iraqi border at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980; A Pakistani guy and his son riding a fake-nuke parade float in Karachi on the fourth anniversary of Pakistan's discovery of the bomb, May, 2002; One of the many piles of massacred corpses in Sabra and Shatila, Israel, 1982; Terry Anderson, AP's Beirut bureau chief, after being taken hostage by Shiite Hezbollah militants in 1985 (and having his glasses taken away). Photos by Getty, except bottom right by Reuters.*





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jumpsuit, with a knife held to our throat. But when you're doing a story, you can't sit at the hotel and use a mobile phone. You have to get out on the streets and see it with your own eyes. Another *Independent* correspondent, Patrick Cockburn, is in Iraq now. He takes the risks needed to cover the story. I should be going back to Iraq soon.

**So the fear is there, but you still get out in the field.**
Yes, but sometimes I imagine Tony Blair watching a videotape of me begging him to withdraw the British troops from Iraq or else I will be beheaded. What would he say? "Hum… poor old boy." After all I wrote about him, I guess he wouldn't move a finger to save me!

**You're probably quite lucky to still be alive.**
When my second book came out, my editor bought me champagne—not to celebrate the book launch, but to celebrate that I survived. And I have been lucky. I remember the Battle of Fish Lake during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. I was on the Iranian side. The Iraqis were shelling heavily. I remember a British journalist who was there saying, "I don't think I could take more than a day of this." When we got to the end of the dike, a revolutionary guard took me up to the front line and I could see the lights of the Sheraton hotel in Basra on the other side. The bullets were flying like wasps, but at a time like that I find you lose your fear of death because you're too close to it.

**So why is it so important to take such risks and to report from war zones?**
For the sake of history but also so that people in the future will never be able to say, as they did with the Holocaust, "We didn't know. No one told us." We write about the Middle East simply so that people will know what happens here.

**In your view, what is the biggest threat in the area today?**
Pakistan.

**Wow, you didn't even hesitate for a second there.**
We are told that the biggest threat is Iran, but it's rubbish. The story of Iran's nuclear crisis isn't what you'd expect. Originally the Shah of Iran, who was like our policeman in the Gulf—our friend—wanted nuclear facilities. We practically gave them to him. The nuclear facility at Busher was built by Siemens, a German company. The Shah even went to New York and gave an interview to CBS or ABC, I can't remember, where he said, "I want a bomb because the Americans and the Soviets have one." President Jimmy Carter welcomed him. There was no problem. Then later on, during the Islamic Revolution, I was in Tehran when the Ayatollah Khomeini said, "Nuclear facilities are the work of the devil." He used the word *sheitan*, meaning "devil," and he said, "We are closing them down." And he did. In 1985, when Saddam was swamping Iran with chemical weapons that had been given to him by the U.S., the Iranians said that they would have to reopen the nuclear facilities because they were afraid that next time, Saddam would use atomic bombs against them.

Anyway, I think that Pakistan is a much greater threat to the West than any other country in this region.

**We are told that the biggest threat is Iran, but it's rubbish… I think that Pakistan is a much greater threat to the West than any other country in this region.**

**I'm almost afraid to ask this, but why?**
Because it's a Muslim country packed with Taliban and al-Qaeda supporters, because it has a nuclear bomb and a dictatorship which could be overthrown at any time, and because it has security services which I believe substantially support the Taliban and al-Qaeda. At the moment, Pakistan's dictator, General Pervez Musharaf, is our friend, so there's no problem with Pakistan. It's on our side. Iran is the bad guy. This is what my colleagues in journalism would say. But I say that Pakistan is the danger.

Be sure of one thing though: We will not bomb Pakistan, because it has the bomb. It's the same reason we will not bomb North Korea.

**What do you think of as the greatest scoop of your career?**
It was in 1996, when Israel bombed the UN compound in Cana, South Lebanon. One hundred and six people were killed, half of whom were children. Israel immediately said it didn't know it was targeting a UN compound, but I proved the opposite. I got a UN video showing an Israeli drone over the camp. The UN officer who gave it to me said, "I give it to you because the children who died in the compound were the same age as my own children." The next day, I flew to London and I asked all the senior editors of my newspaper to watch the videotape of the drone flying over the camp as it was being bombarded. We could even hear a UN officer shouting, "Help! Help! We are being bombarded!" The story made the three front pages of the Monday edition. It was titled "Video Puts Israel in the Dock." I gave dozens of interviews after it went out and we sent the video to all major media outlets.

**Does a story stand out for you that was particularly life-changing? Something that transformed you personally?**
The Massacre of Sabra and Shatila in September 1982. I spent the whole day, September 18th, climbing over the dead bodies of children, women, men… even horses. My hands smelled like death. That day, I said to myself, "I'm not afraid anymore of being abused or categorized as anti-Semitic or racist or whatever." It didn't matter anymore what people would say. I would face up to anyone who would dare to lie and say that I was anti-Semitic. The Israelis watched the whole massacre and let it happen.

**How do you cope with the pressure of your job?**
[*Laughing*] I hate the word *cope* and I hate when journalists are asked, "How do you cope? Do you need counseling?" It's rubbish.

**Sorry.**
The people here who suffer and are killed in air raids—they need help. We don't. We are quite well paid. We can go home in business class if we want.

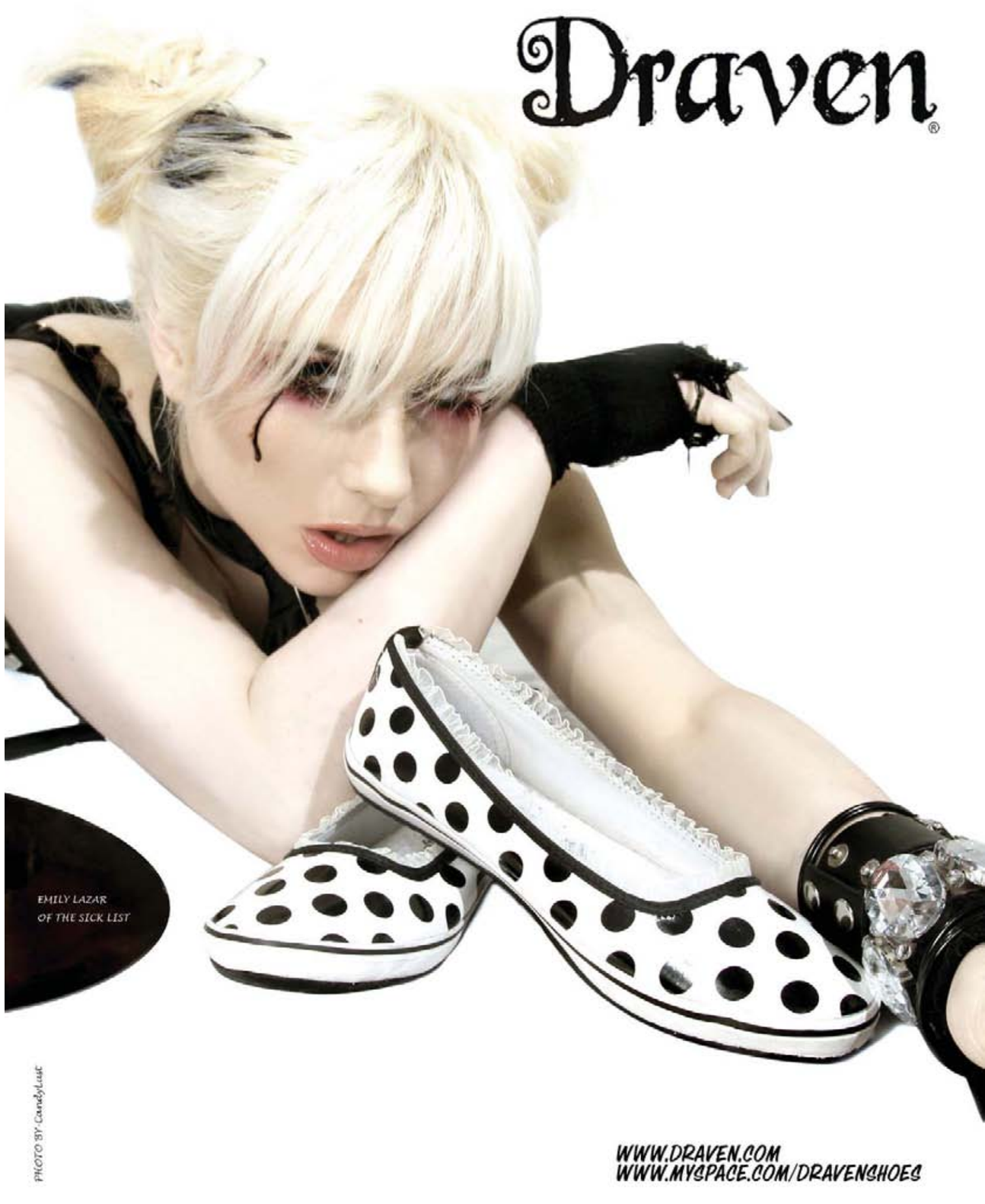
**Let's rephrase it. How do you relax?**
I listen to music. I have the entire works of Bach. I read a lot of poetry. I read Shakespeare. I always remember an extraordinary poem that W.H. Auden wrote. I think it was called "Epithaph on a Tyrant." It was obviously written about Stalin but I always thought it applied quite well to Saddam. It reads, "Perfection of a kind is what he was after,/And the poetry he invented was easy to understand;/He knew human folly like the back of his hand,/And was greatly interested in armies and fleets;/When he laughed, respectable senators burst with laughter,/And when he cried the little children died in the streets."

I think you've got to transfer history into art to truly understand it.

**Does your job affect your personal life?**
I'm afraid that my personal life is called journalism. It doesn't give much room for anything else.

KATIA JARJOURA





# WE GOT OUT

## North Korean Refugees Tell Us About the Homeland

*I met these three people in a nine-story Christian church for North Korean refugees in Seoul. I don't know the church's name; the reverend told me just to call it Seoul Church. It looked exactly like a Christian church in Texas or anywhere in the heartland. The parishioners wore suits and dresses; the kids wore acid-washed jeans and sportswear. On the seventh floor, a family was eating in a huge cafeteria, and next door, four ladies in aprons were trying to get a classroom of hyperspazzing children to settle down.*

But I was going to the ninth floor, to a classroom that looked exactly like your standard high-school geometry room, where Rev. Kwang Il-park was passing out leather-bound hymnals to a roomful of twitchy refugees. I sat down in the back, and a teenage girl got up, went to a closet in the front of the room, and returned with a hymnal in English. It was photocopied on green paper and comb-bound with a plastic cover. Standing at a podium in front of a couple of dry-erase boards, Rev. Il-park gave the word. A 60-year-old Korean lady to his left began to play an electric keyboard. He began to sing into a microphone. The others came in, and my heart broke. Afterward, the reverend called me to the front of the room along with my interpreter, and in probably the most ridiculous moment in my life, I held up a copy of *Vice* magazine and introduced myself, saying I'd like to talk to anyone who wanted to talk to me.

Three people did. Here are their stories:

### REV. KWANG IL-PARK

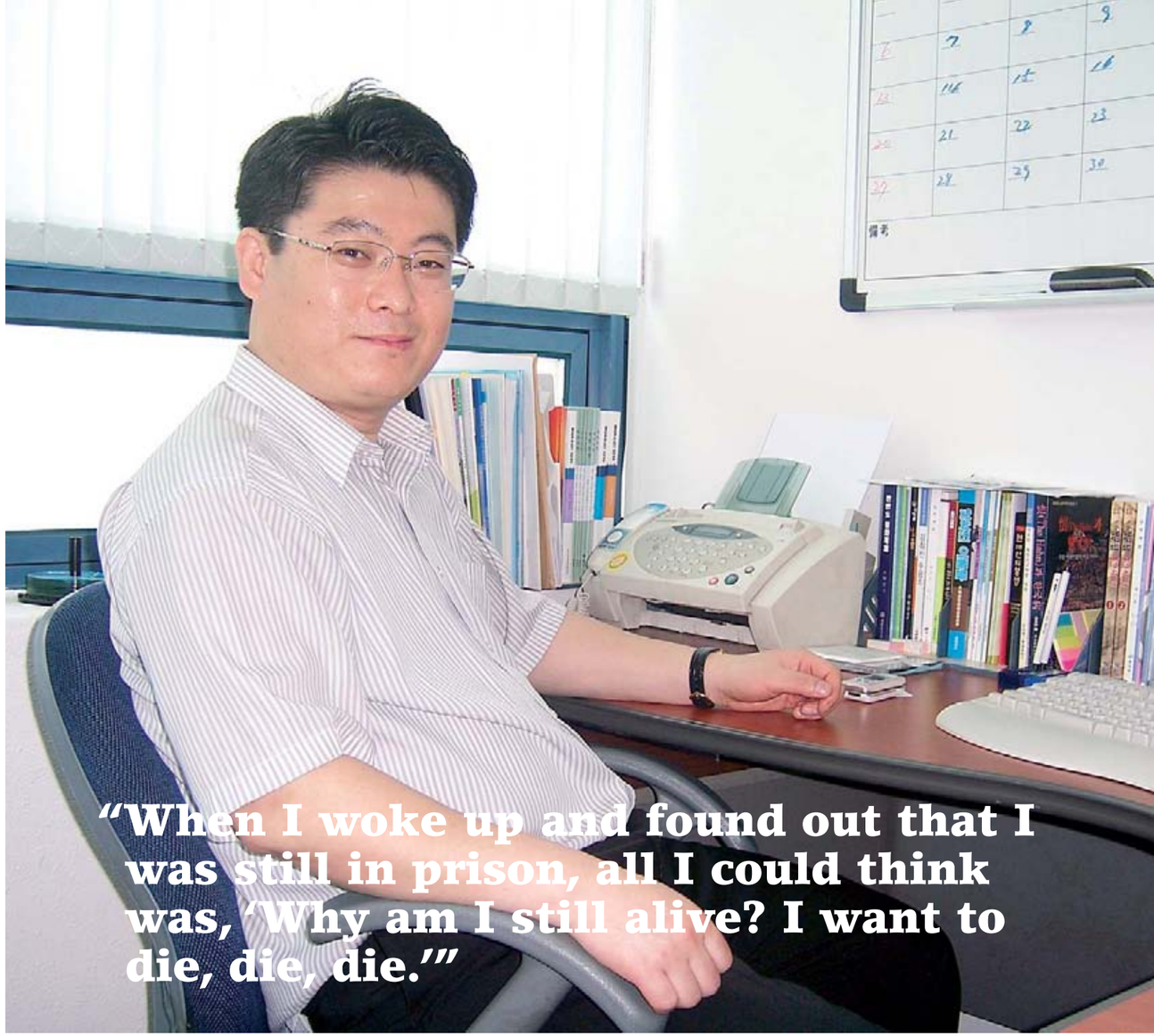
I was born in Hamheung, one of the biggest industrial cities in North Korea. I was a very rich boy, so I practiced gymnastics from when I was five years old until I was ten. My house was about 15 feet wide, with two rooms. It was divided in the middle. I shared a room with my parents. This was not because my family was poor, but because in North Korea the government controls the housing. We couldn't buy a different house—we had what the government gave us. Later, the government had to borrow money from my family to complete a housing development. In return for the favor, they gave us five units in the building.

Hamheung is much like an industrial city in the West, except because there is very little electricity in North Korea and very few raw materials and money, there are big factories but they do not run. In the West, if there is a factory, it is always open and workers are working there all the time. But in North Korea, the facility is there, but there are no materials and there is no electricity, so the factories are closed. Since there is no work at the factory, the workers don't come in or get paid. Every now and then, the factories get raw materials from the government, and they make a product, and the government buys it. But often the process doesn't work, no products go to the government and no money goes to the factories. The factories sit quiet and dark, empty except for the maintenance people and guards.

North Korean society has four groups of people. The highest level of society is made up of government officers. The second is the middle class, the third is the normal, average people, and at the bottom are people who don't have proper thoughts—the anti-Communist people. The higher two groups have rice and vegetables, but the bottom two groups don't have enough rice. They eat grass and trees. When spring comes, people pick at the edible trees and grasses and boil and eat them.

There are two major powers in North Korea: the military and the government. There is only one political power, as you know, that of Kim Jong-il. The heads of the military are very close to Kim Jong-il. Those people are in Pyongyang. There are also the heads of provinces. These make up what we call the "middle class," which doesn't mean the same thing as it does over here—when we say it in North Korea, the term refers to the upper class. The normal class, people like us, are the workers.

I was in the normal class but there was a lot of money in my family. At first, I didn't think about defecting because my life in North Korea was very comfortable. Even though my family did not have political power, most of my friends were in the middle class. But in 1986, I saw a soap opera in the black market in North Korea. It was a very famous South Korean soap called *Hourglass*. It was very big in South Korea, and since it was so interesting, I loaned it to many of my friends in the middle class, and they loaned it to all of their friends, and it spread throughout the middle class. It became a big problem. North Korea was suffering from an economic depression at the time, and the government didn't want Western culture—what they call "Yellow Culture"—to spread in North Korea. National Security tried to find out who had started spreading the soap opera.



**"When I woke up and found out that I was still in prison, all I could think was, 'Why am I still alive? I want to die, die, die.'"**

Many of the people who saw and copied and gave the drama away were middle-class people, so they had the power. Their parents were working in the government. Although my parents had money, they were not working for the government. They didn't have any political powers, so I was picked as a scapegoat for the incident, and the government decided to evict me to China. They had to punish somebody and they picked me. The government said, "Evict him to China, and when everybody forgets about the incident, he can come back."

I stayed in the Wharyong area for a while, because it is near the border. I decided I wanted to stay in China, so I went deeper into the mainland, but then I was caught and sent back to Musan, where I was questioned by North Korean officers for a week. Then I was transferred to Chung Jin and questioned even more by National Security soldiers. I slept in a small concrete room. I wasn't allowed to lie down at night—the guards would not let me. As part of my punishment, I had to sleep in a sitting position. I was fed once a day with a small bowl of corn, beans, and vegetables. And then daily, for 40 days, I was taken to another room with a desk and two chairs, and I was tortured by two men. I was very scared—scared to death. The investigators' job was to find anti-Communist spies, and to that end they tortured me. My bones were broken all over my body. They asked the same questions over and over: "Why did you run farther away into China? Where did you get the video tape? Do you have contact with South Korean spies? Do you have any additional tapes? Why are you so anti-Communist?"

When I didn't answer their questions, or answered wrong, they would kick me or punch me or beat me with big wooden sticks. Also, there is a torture called "pigeon." They tied my arms and feet together behind my back and hung me by my hands and feet from the ceiling, so I was flying in space like a pigeon. They suspended me like this generally for two or three hours. Your head is heavy, so in the pigeon position, your head goes down, your blood

"I found that China was a very nice place to live because there was rice everywhere. People just threw the rice away because they were full."

goes into your face, and the brain doesn't work properly, so it makes you lose consciousness. And then every time I passed out, they dipped my head into water so I would wake up, and then the process would begin again. Often when I was passed out, I would forget where I was, and then I would wake up and remember. But after about ten days of beating and torturing, all you can think about is that you want to die as quickly as possible. So when I woke up and found out that I was in prison, all I could think was, "Why am I still alive? I want to die, die, die." Many people do die during the 40 days of investigation, so I expected myself to be dead. There was no hope that I could get free, so I just wanted to end everything: the physical pain and the foolishness. I just wanted to die. After getting beaten so many times, there comes a time when you don't feel anything, not even physical pain, just a dumbness. Like in a boxing match, the boxer doesn't feel much pain... The body sensors get dumb. So after a certain amount of torture, I couldn't feel much pain anymore.

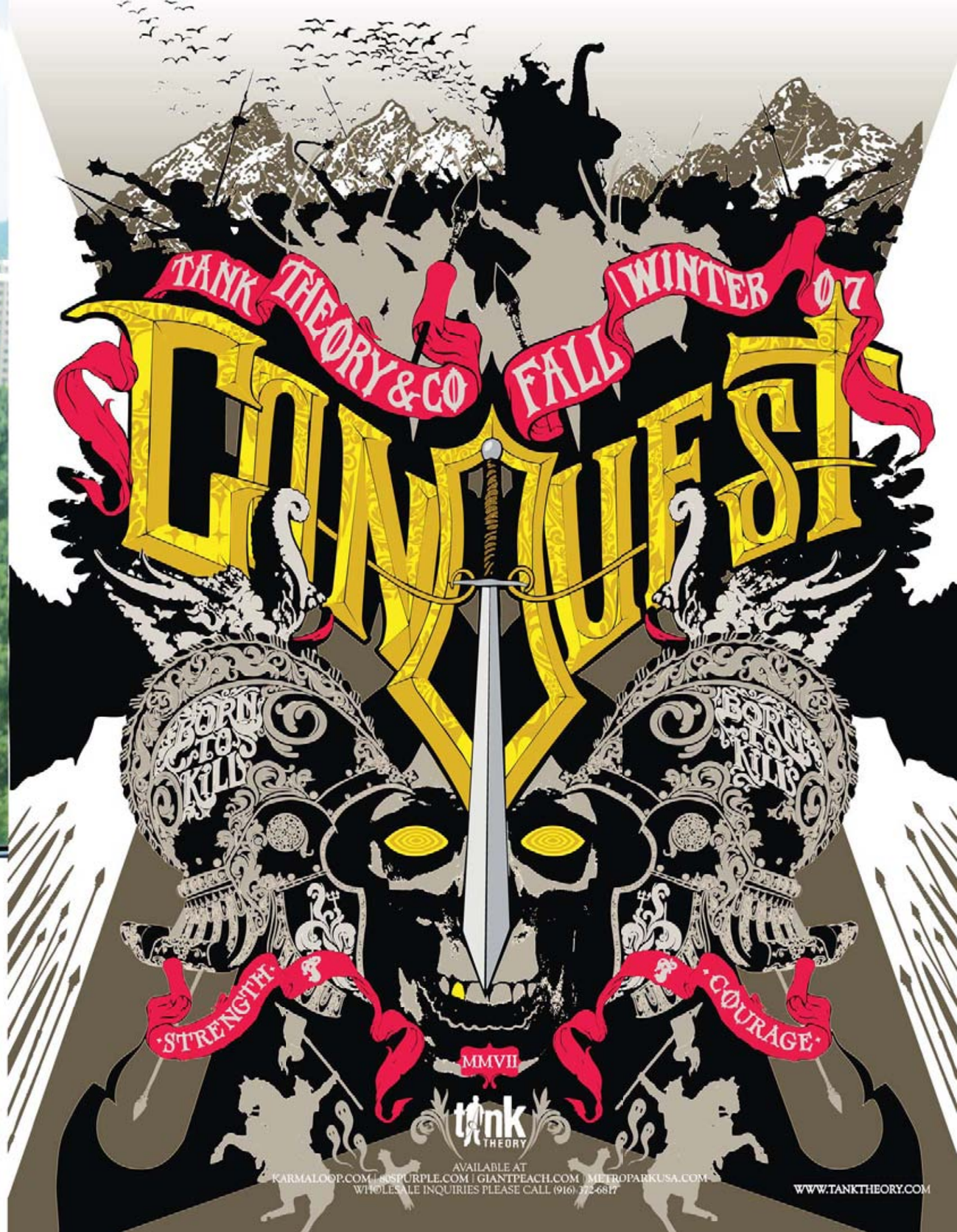
When my 40 days were over I was to be sent by train to North Korea to jail. In the train I was depressed. I couldn't bear the fact I was going to be imprisoned in North Korea and I decided to commit suicide. I stepped outside the moving train and jumped into a river but miraculously, I didn't die. After that, I made my way into South Korea.

### KYUNG HI LEE

My father was born in North Korea and my mother was born in South Korea. But during the 6/25 War [the Korean War], my mother volunteered as a North Korean military officer. I was born in Pyongyang, and I had a very nice life there. The North Korean government rations food to the people, and in Pyongyang all the people get rice, no matter how low their social status is.

When you look at the city of Pyongyang, it is beautiful—it is even better looking than Seoul. The city is very clean and the opera house is beautiful and everything is very good-looking. But when you go inside a building, there's no electricity, so you can't





use the elevators. You have to use the stairways to go up to the top of a building, however tall. There is no water in the buildings when the electricity is cut off, so most of the time, when you turn the faucet on, the water will not come out. You have to draw the water by hand and then carry it upstairs. There is no heating system in the buildings because there is no electricity, so it is cold and you have to wear warm clothes all the time. It is kind of a comical situation.

When I was 14, the government decided that even though my mother had fought on their side in the war, she was born in the South, so she could not be trusted entirely. Our family was put outside of Pyongyang. For the first year, we lived in On-sung, in a house shared by several families in a similar situation. After the first year, our family got out of the house, and we found a very small house in a rural area.

My parents were doctors in Pyongyang but in the course of trying to defect, then I would be killed by the guards. I decided that I had to take the chance, because if I stayed in North Korea I would die of starvation.

China was across the river from On-sung so all I had to do was to cross the river. Because I lived in the town growing up, I knew all the guards and at what time they always came and went.

My husband couldn't come, because he has a lot of brothers and sisters in North Korea, and if he defected it would affect their lives. We had two daughters. One was ten years old and one was five years old. I took the older daughter with me when I crossed the river. I found that China was a very nice place to live because there was rice everywhere. People just threw the rice away because they were full. I was surprised to see so many people living without starvation. I thought I should take the younger daughter too, so I went back to get her.

**"But I was wearing a Chinese perfume, and in On-sung nobody had any perfume. The North Koreans knew I was coming from China, so they took me and imprisoned me for four months."**

after the eviction, they had to do physical labor on the housing-construction sites and in the mines. Because working at the mines was punishment, my parents could not find any happiness there. Nevertheless, they felt grateful that they were not in prison. They still had some freedom, so they were thankful. I was the same. I didn't have hard feelings or bad feelings for Kim Il-sung, because I was young, and they continuously teach the young people that he is the great father of the North Korean people. I thought that he was a very good person and he was feeding me with the rice. The food was given by him, the clothes were given by him. I felt very thankful to him.

In the 1990s, a lot of people died from starvation, and I started to think about defecting. On-sung is part of the border area, very near China's Northern Province. I saw a lot of people coming from China with rice and money. I thought that if I stayed in On-sung I would starve to death, but I saw that if I got caught

I was walking alongside the river in the early evening, going to get my younger daughter, and the North Korean soldiers caught me. They fired questions at me: "Where are you coming from? Why are you walking along the river? Are you trying to cross the river?" I said, "Oh no, my house is just over there and I am going back to my house." But I was wearing a Chinese perfume, and in On-sung nobody had any perfume. Also, I was wearing nice Chinese clothing—a cotton jacket and cotton pants. The North Koreans just knew I was coming from China, so they took me and imprisoned me for four months.

There were about ten women in a room that was nine-by-seven feet. Ten women can only fit in that like sardines, all lying down. There was one water faucet in the room and one toilet. There was a pipe by the ceiling and water was always dripping out. Except for at bedtime, I had to sit up and I couldn't move. Everybody had to sit up and we could only move for five minutes every two hours. It was our punishment—sitting still. At night when people slept we could get up and move around.

There was one woman who had given birth to a baby about a month before I arrived, and her body was still unrecovered. She couldn't move. She couldn't walk from her spot to the toilet, so we had to carry her. She started to cry and shout that she could not walk, so they took her out after ten days and sent her back home.

I was beaten by the guards. I bled. I was tortured in the prison. They kicked me and beat me until I became unconscious. I was unconscious for 20 hours. I was lying down in my blood, in the room with the other nine women. The other women tried to clean me up and help me, but there was no medicine or doctor in the prison. About ten days after I woke up, there was an outbreak of typhus and I got it. With high fever, the body will tremble. Three or four women had typhus during this time. When we recovered, the others got it, back and forth. It passed down the hallway to the other cells, so we could listen to the other women at night, when it was quiet, and they'd be moaning.

During this time, my ten-year-old daughter was in China with a couple who felt very sorry for me and her. I was able to defect again after I got out of prison, and I paid a Chinese broker to take me and my daughters to Seoul. It cost about $7,000 total, and this is money I was able to pay using the resettlement money I received from the South Korean government upon my arrival. On-sung is a rural city, so when it rains everybody has to wear rain boots. When I got to South Korea, the first thing I did was go to the department store to buy rain boots for my kids. The guy in the store asked my why I wanted to buy rain boots in Seoul and I said, "Isn't it rainy in Seoul? I don't want my children's feet to get dirty." He thought it was very funny.

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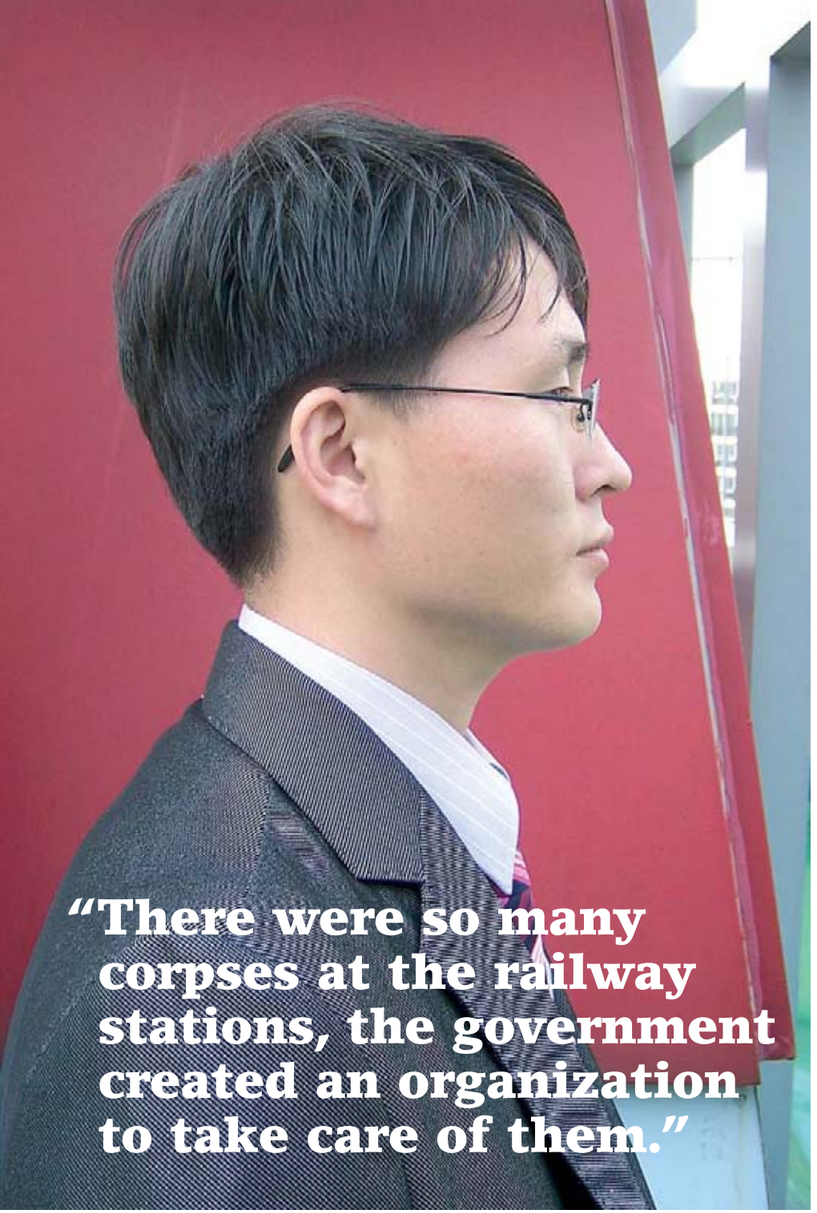


**"There were so many corpses at the railway stations, the government created an organization to take care of them."**

**HAK CHEOL KIM**

The human rights issues in North Korea are really urgent and the situation is really bad. About 3 million people died of starvation between 1993 and 1998. It started in 1993 because that was the year Kim Il-sung died. After his death, society went into total chaos and the high officers didn't care about the welfare of the normal people, because they were busy saving their own necks.

I starved during that time. After starving for ten or more days you lose all your energy. You lose the energy to walk. When I did manage to walk in the street, I saw a person in front of me fall down, and he had no energy to get up. He just stayed lying down in the road, because he didn't have anything in his stomach. I couldn't help him because I had nothing in my stomach either so I just passed by, and the person who fell down died there. I saw a lot of people lying down in the street.

During this time, young people in North Korea ran out of their homes because there was no food. They ran away and lived with other young people. These kids were called *koseibi*, which means "the young kids who are moving around like swallows." They stole or begged, and that's how they lived every day. It is very cold in North Korea and if five of them went to sleep at the station, only two or three of them would wake up. They'd die because of the cold weather. There were so many corpses at the railway stations, the government created an organization to take care of them. It was called 918 Public Service. Koseibis were dying every day in large numbers, so the 918 Public Service tried to bury their bodies in the nearby mountains. During the winter the ground is frozen, so you cannot dig it deep enough to put in the bodies. They just dug shallow holes and put the bodies inside and covered them with some dirt.

When I was in high school, my friend was at this rice field near town, and behind it there was a mountain used for burial. There was not enough stone to make tombstones, so the graves had these white nameplates instead. The mountain was entirely covered with these white wooden sticks. During the spring and during the summer, the bodies that were not buried deep enough started to come out as the ground thawed, and there was a stink. The skeletons were fine because they did not stink, but some bodies were not completely decomposed yet and there was still flesh on the bones. That makes a lot of stink.

My father was locked up in the political prison and my mother was working in the city to make some money to support me and my brother, so we were left alone in the house with one bowl of corn that had to last five days. I ate one piece of corn every hour.

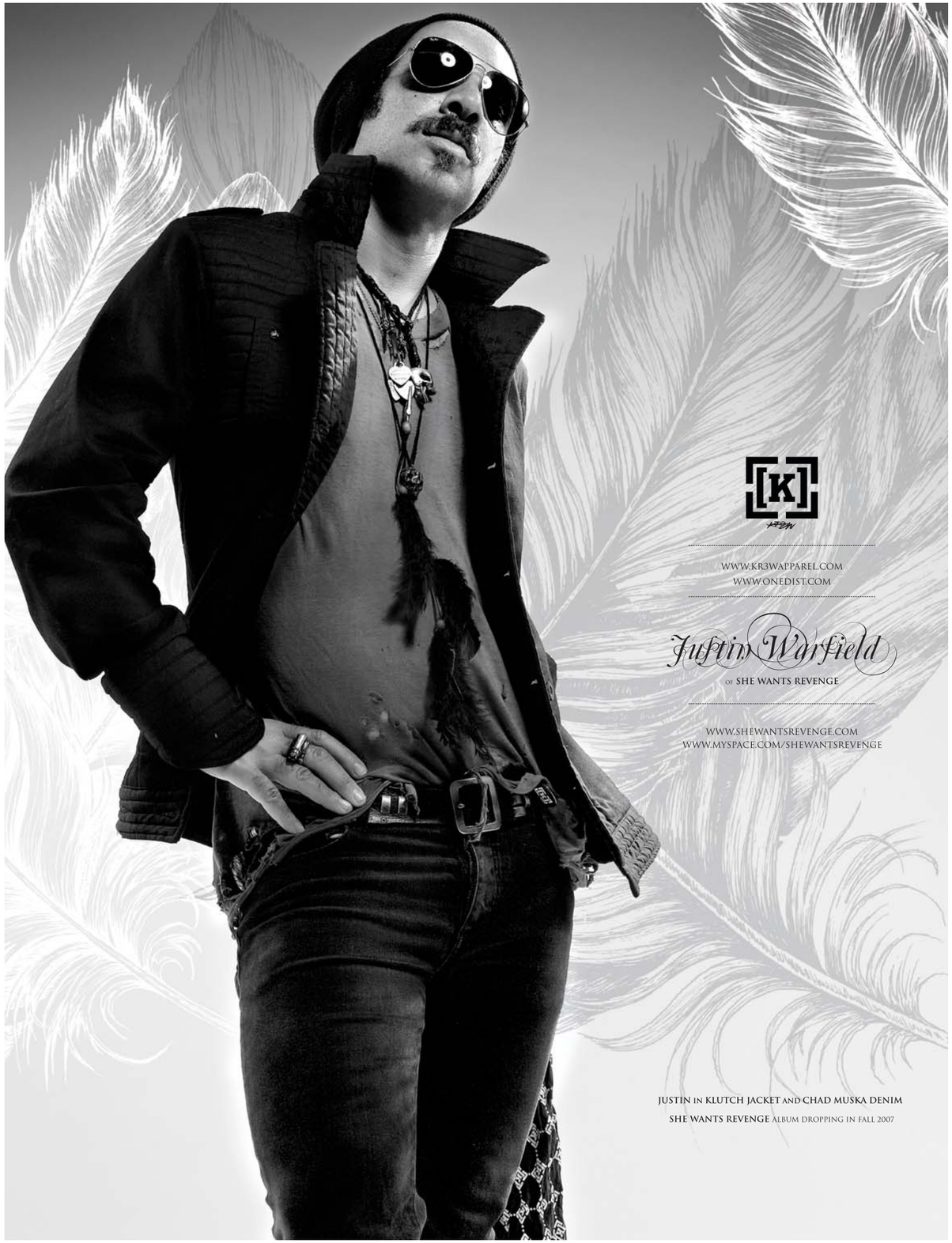
About 15 million tons of rice are needed for the North Korean people to survive for a year. Since the 1960s the rice production has only been 8 million tons. The Soviet Union and East Germany used to help out, but now North Korea is not getting any help, even from its allies.

The only way to make things better is to make the world know about the awful status of people's lives in North Korea today. What the U.S. is doing right now is affecting North Korea. They are banning economic transactions between North Korea and other countries. This is responsible for the starvation to some extent, but the major reason why the North Koreans are suffering is that the government of Kim Jong-il is refusing to open up because they killed so many people to get to their current positions. They cannot open up, because they would have to face military trial.

Most refugees in South Korea or other countries are sending money to their families in North Korea, because even if you don't have any money in South Korea you can still live, but if you don't have any money in North Korea you will die. It's a strange life… That's all I have to say today.

AS TOLD TO AMIE BARRODALE





# IT HAPPENED: CRACKHEADS STOLE THE DOOR OFF MY ROOF

TEXT BY OTTESSA MOSHFEGH, PHOTO BY BEN RITTER

We moved into a house a few blocks from the Marcy projects at the end of last summer. The day we moved in, one of our neighbors asked me how much I'd paid to rent our moving van. I told her, and she said, "I've got to get me and my kid the fuck out of here. Welcome to the neighborhood."

In time, it became obvious the place next door was a drug den. A constant flow of completely ravaged humans trudged up and down the steps, puking and throwing garbage out of the windows, pushing shopping carts full of drywall over the sidewalks for fun. You could hear them screeching and wailing and beating on each other through the walls. It turned out they were a group of crackheads who'd been in the building so long they had squatters' rights and couldn't be evicted. They're notorious on our block, apparently, for moving en mass into houses when they're being renovated or sold, like flocks of fucked-up geese.

Around November, I quit drinking and got insomnia. These "neighbors" played loud music at unpredictable intervals at any hour of night and it filled me with murderous rage. My doctor prescribed me Trazodone—some sort of sleeping pills—and I started using earplugs. I thought I was in the clear.

Then one Friday night I went to bed. All was quiet. The pills kicked in and I was dead asleep when at 3 AM I heard the sound of murder through the wall. "I'm going to fucking kill you," screamed the woman, and, "You kill me and I will chase you and rape and kill you in hell, bitch," screamed the man, stuff like that, with audible beating and kicking and slamming into walls, then scrambling up and down the stairs, and then it sounded like someone was stomping on the ceiling. I woke up. In my drug haze I got out of bed. My room is on the top floor. I opened my bedroom door and felt an icy breeze. A shaft of moonlight spilled in from above. I looked up at the ceiling, at a hole where the door to the roof should have been. I saw the clear ivory ellipse of the moon, and calmly thought, "A crackhead has broken into the house through the roof by ripping off the door and is standing behind me with a kitchen knife. He will put one hand over my mouth to muffle my screams and another hand will press the knife to my throat while he drags me back into my bedroom where he will slice my head off and rape me before going downstairs to do the same to my roommate. Then he will steal our computers and our DVD player, eat the food I left out on the stove, and leave the front door open." I waited a minute or two to see if this was going to happen. It didn't. I was still very messed up from the Trazodone.

I made it downstairs and knocked on my roommate's door. "I think we should call the police. The neighbors are killing each other and I think there's someone in the house."

"The police are already outside," she said.

I looked out the window and there were three or four cruisers parked out there, and a bunch of cops sitting on our stoop. Remember, I was on Trazodone for all of this.

I opened the door and said, "Hey, can you come in here? Someone stole the door to our roof."

I should also mention that it was the middle of winter, and very cold.

It took about ten minutes to get two cops into the house, and they were the stupidest people I've ever met. I actually think they were mentally retarded. They were fat, and they huffed and complained as they climbed the two flights of stairs up to inspect the missing roof door.

They were like, "How do you know the roof door is missing?"

We were standing directly under the hole in the ceiling.

"How do you know it wasn't missing when you got home?"

"Why do you think it's missing?"

"Did you go up on the roof tonight?"

All I could get out of them was that they were responding to a domestic violence call next door.

"Can you make sure there isn't a psychopath on the roof?"

"You want us to go up on the roof?" They acted like I was going to force them up there.

And it continued like this for 20 minutes, them grumbling and giving each other looks while I rolled my eyes and fought off the Trazodone, which was on the cusp of making me barf, and then another ten minutes while my roommate looked around our apartment for a piece of furniture they could stand on to look out on the roof. All of our furniture would have broken under the weight of half of one of them.

Then out of nowhere this Superman cop comes running up the stairs. Probably seven feet tall, gorgeous, with rippling muscles.

"What seems to be the problem? Did one of those crackheads steal the door to your roof?

"Yes!"

And in five seconds flat he had hoisted himself up and was out on the roof with a flashlight. "Nobody up here, nothing."

And then he was down. Gleaming, beautiful, Christ Almighty. Seriously. "Don't worry about the crackheads. They're all too fucked up to do anything to hurt you. They might steal a door off your roof and forget what they meant to do. You should call a carpenter tomorrow morning."

And that was it.

A few months later the crackheads got kicked out of the house to the left of us, and they moved to the house on the right side of us and set up shop for real. The principal crackhead in charge is a serious older dude named Slim. He checks in with me from time to time and I complain about the noise. Then there's Don Juan. He offered me some meth after I told him I'd just quit my job. For some reason I made up this excuse about being sick instead of just refusing. I said, "I have a blood disease." He said, "Look at my hands!" He held them up, and they were like monstrously huge! Like twice as big as his head, like weights he's carrying around with these big leechy wounds all over them and fingernails like a dragon's. Then he said he was dying of cancer. He kept winking with every sentence as though he was secretly talking in code. He also said there was a camera set up across the street from the crackhouse, which records everything—everything in the world that ever happens. He said I should drop in sometime, that we could hang. I went over there before I started to write this and knocked and knocked, but nobody answered.

# YOUR LOGO HERE
## (AND HERE, AND HERE, AND HERE)

*Photographer Deanna Templeton recently began documenting a trend that's been happening at more or less any event held in Southern California revolving around surfing or skateboarding. Young men and women are getting "branded" (in both the marketing and the bovine senses) with a company logo that's either spray-painted or written directly on their skin.*

*It's understandable that companies would want to attach their logo to the nubile young belly of a bikinied beach babe, but what Deanna doesn't understand is the willingness of the person who is being made into a billboard. "There is a lot of touching involved." Deanna says, "I think maybe it's a way of flirting and of being seen."*

*Although Deanna is asking a lot of questions regarding the body politics of teenagers and corporate ad guys, she wants you to know that the photos themselves are free from judgment. You're just going to have to make your own call on this one, all right?*

**VICE STAFF**

*You can see the full series in Deanna's new book* Your Logo Here, *published by PAMBooks Australia. You can get it at Someday-store.com.*

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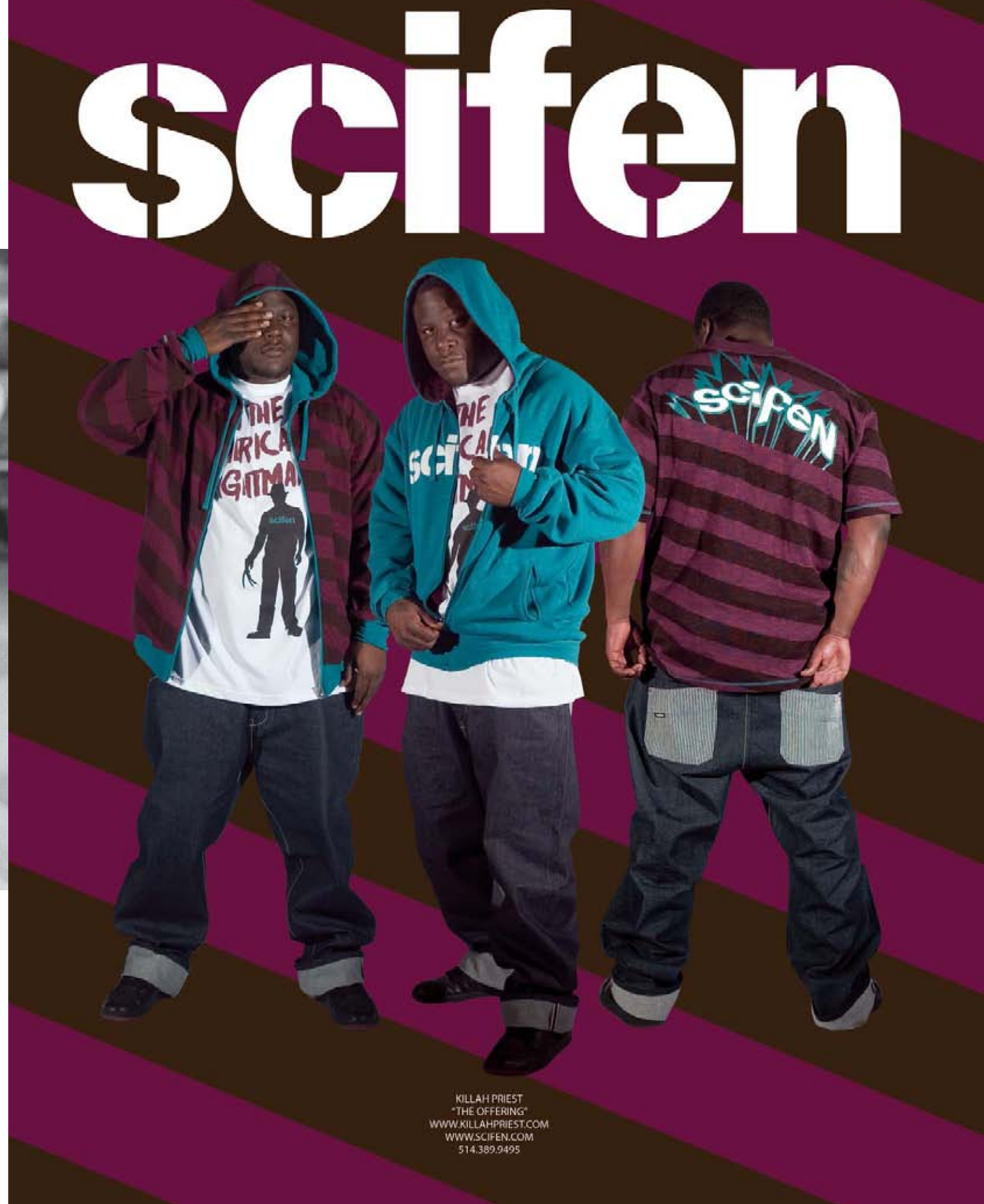
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# VULTURE CULTURE

## Selling Memories at Ground Zero

PHOTOS BY ALAIN LEVITT

**Vice: Whatcha selling here, pictures?**
**Ann:** Didn't you hear? There were these two buildings here right behind me that got knocked down. Many people died, and now people come here to see it and buy pictures of the buildings and what happened.

**We did hear about that. Which ones are the most popular?**
People really like the picture of the new tower they're putting up and the diagram of the planes hitting the buildings. I sell the postcard book with those two pictures most often.

**Does anybody give you a hard time for peddling mementos of the tragedy that happened right behind you?**
Sometimes in the evening the workers from behind the fence will be tired and sort of angry, and they'll come and get in fights with me. It was really bad last year on the fifth anniversary. They were all really mad and I had to pack up and leave.

**It must be kind of creepy working right here every day. Do you think there are any ghosts who are still in the area?**
What? No, of course not.

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*Yoko Devereaux hat, Quiksilver shirt*

**Vice: How long have you been a vendor?**
**Alex:** I've been doing this on and off for five years.

**And you're always right here, a stone's throw away from the gaping open wound of the World Trade Center?**
We take it to different places on different days of the week. This is a prime spot, so we trade off with the other vendors.

**But it's got to be kind of a bummer trying to sell stuff to people who've just come from grieving at ground zero. Don't the sad vibes get to you?**
Sometimes, yeah. I try not to think about it.

**Do you think there are any ghosts here?**
That's a real heavy question, when you get into ghosts and spirits. But aren't we all really ghosts and spirits?

**Hmm, that's a good point. So what's selling these days?**
Everything here sells—that's why I have it all on the table. But if you want to know what my best seller is, that would be the little rectangular guy with the whole skyline in it. It's got a little bit of everything, including the spooky old towers.

The Diggers Society

T-shirt # 6 by Diamond Supply Co.

The Diggers Society is **Digital Gravel**'s t-shirt of the month club featuring exclusive designs from streetwear's premium independent brands. These designs will only ever be available to members of The Diggers Society. To join, please log on to http://www.digitalgravel.com. Can you dig it?

AS SEEN ON DG

**Vice: This seems like a pretty sweet place to set up shop—right between the waterfront and ground zero.**
**Tony:** I never pictured it like that, but I guess so.

**Do you move the table to different places from day to day, or is this it?**
We're always in the same spot, six days a week.

**Isn't it sort of a downer sitting right next to ground zero, watching grieving and upset people pass by all day?**
It affects everybody. So many people passed away in the buildings. It's crazy.

**Does anybody ever chew you out for exploiting the tragedy?**
There are some people that are friendly and there are some people that are unfriendly. The unfriendly ones usually don't yell at us or anything though. They just want to be left alone.

*Vintage Red shirt, Odyssey 2020 sunglasses*

*Brixton hat, Mishka jacket*

**Vice: How long have you been running this table, which is so close to the former World Trade Center I could chuck this coffee cup into the rubble if I wanted to?**
**Bruce:** I've been here for eight months. The table's been here for years though.

**This seems like it'd be some pretty prime real estate.**
It varies day to day. On the weekends there are spots that are better than this, but during the week, because of the big draw for the World Trade Center, we do fairly well.

**It doesn't dampen anyone's buying mood that they're on their way either from or to what is basically a mass grave?**
I think it has an effect on everybody. I mean, how can it not? When you think about all the devastation that happened right there, it makes you tremble.

**What are folks buying these days?**
The Wall Street bull figurines and the little towers sell well. And of course the crystals with the towers in them. Those are popular.

**Are you going to be down here for the anniversary this year?**
I hope so. I've never been down here on the 11th before, so I don't know what it's going to be like.

## NESTA BRAND

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*Brixton hat, Mishka sweater*

**Vice: How long have you been manning this station?**
**Nestor:** I've been down here since before the towers fell. I was right over there on Fulton Street the day it happened.

**What happened to the table you had on 9/11? Were you able to pack it up in time to get out of here?**
No, we left it. When the first tower fell, all that dust shot out so fast no one had time to pack their stuff up. Everybody just ran, so I lost my table. I never put in my paperwork to get paid for it either.

**Why not? Because it was too difficult for you to deal with, or because you thought there were people who needed it more than you?**
Eh, whenever I'd come down here to do it there were so many people in line, it'd be an all-day wait. So I said, forget about it.

**Do you set up shop on September 11th each year, or is that day off-limits?**
I've been here for all the anniversaries. At the beginning you'd make a lot of money, because there were a lot of tourists coming down here to see it. Now it's slacked off a bit.

**Do folks ever get pissed off at you for hawking wares right next to the site of the country's biggest tragedy?**
You always have a tourist or two come by your table and rattle something out like "The nerve." But we don't pay them no mind, because we know a lot of them are hurting and they just don't know how to let it out. The cops were the big ones on our case for a long while.

**They'd yell at you too? Would they try to shut you down?**
At the beginning they wouldn't let us sell anything. They didn't want to see the books with the people jumping out or the plane hitting. Now they don't bother us so much anymore.

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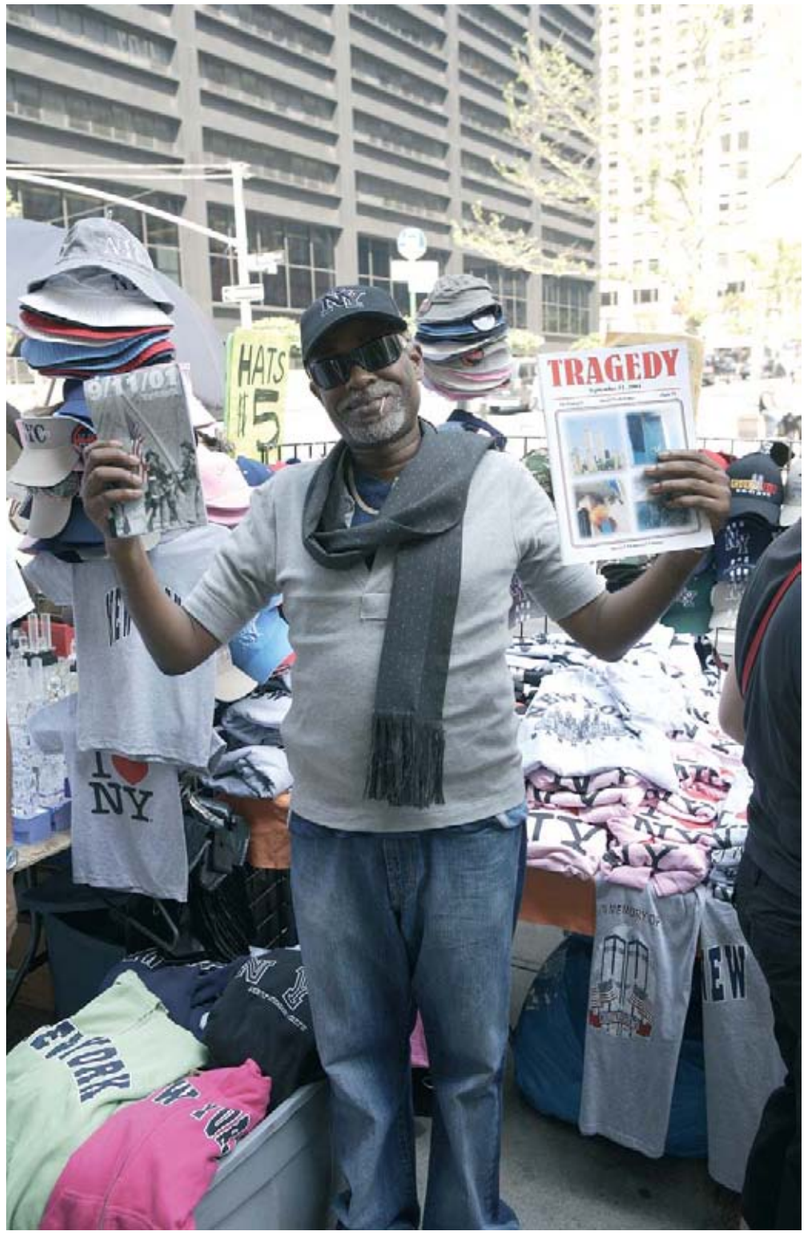


*Yoko Devereaux shirt, Stussy hat, Barking Irons scarf, Odyssey 2020 sunglasses*

**Vice: So this is your vending turf, eh?**
**Tyrone:** On the weekends I go up to the 42nd Street, Times Square area. There's more people, better flow of income, you know? Otherwise yes. Ten years, same spot.

**Then you were here selling crap when the towers came down?**
Yes, but I wasn't set up here that morning. I was selling glasses on Broadway and Dey, a block away. After the first crash I went to the end of the block and was watching the fire and next thing you know the second plane hit. Then when the buildings started rocking and collapsing in on themselves I started running.

**Did you ever see those glasses again?**
Actually FEMA set up a program so that you could reclaim what you lost, but you needed receipts, and the license and all my paperwork had been at the table. So what it came down to was my word against theirs, and they weren't trying to just give out the money like that. It took me seven months to get a new table. When I got one, I came right back down here.

**Do people give you grief for profiting off their sadness?**
There are days I get a lot of tourists who come up to me and say, "How can you sell those crystals of the World Trade Center?" and, "That's morbid." Sometimes guys will try to flip the table. It's a different atmosphere on different days.

**Where do you get all the 9/11 books and postcards?**
They come from the same place as the rest of the merchandise. I can't tell you exactly where I get it from, but it all comes from the same place.
**What are the biggest sellers?**
The crystals and the hats. Easily. The hats with "I ♥ NY" and the skyline are always popular, but the ground zero one is really a grabber.

# DRUM DREAM

## *I Was a Drum Leader for Boadrum77*

On 7/7/07, the Boredoms put on a crazy, already-legendary concert under the Brooklyn Bridge with 77 drummers spiraling out from a humongous guitar gong that Boredoms leader Yamataka Eye struck with a giant trident scepter. It was, according to all who attended, "the best show ever."

I was one of the 11 drum leaders for the concert and my initial reaction to the experience is to say simply that there are no words or recordings that can approach what it was like to live that piece and participate in it. Friends who weren't there ask, "how was it?" and I have no answer. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life—how do you say that and not seem like a blowhard?

When I found out I had been selected I felt honored and unworthy. I had visions of Eye having a huddle with the Boredoms after the first rehearsal and deciding that I needed to be let go. There are artists who you respect and there are a few who are beyond understanding. The Boredoms are like that for me. My head was full of fantasy and fear. Failure felt palpable.

The load-in time was at 8:30 AM. By the time I arrived most of the drummers were already there with their kits set up. And like drummers tend to do, they were all banging away. It was a war zone and completely overwhelming. The drums obliterated all thought.

We started the piece at 7:07 PM. The sun was just beginning to set. Seventy-seven drummers sat in the spiral. Eye let out a long wail and we began to play. Drum patterns were passed along the spiral from the center where the Boredoms sat on an elevated stage. The rhythms were simple and powerful and when everyone was playing them at once they felt elemental.

By the time we finished it was almost dark. When the last sound finished I was overcome with emotion. Slowly and granularly the experience began to reveal itself. I had been borne upon an idea so clear and powerful that it transcended all individual weaknesses. I felt blessed and awed.

It is very difficult to relate to people who were outside the spiral. As I was walking the mile back home, I stopped to get a bite to eat. A dude was like, "Hey did you just play at the Boredoms thing?" I said yeah. "You were good," he said. "There was another guy in a white shirt that wasn't so good. He kept dropping his sticks. But you were good."

Suddenly I knew I was going to cry. I could feel it in my chest. I kept rubbing my hands over my face and looking down at the street on the walk home. There are few musical moments that have brought me to tears. When I cried that night it was for the uncommon fortune that had visited me that day. I don't think it's too much to say that my entire life had led me to the moment I started drumming in Boadrum77.

KID MILLIONS

*Photo of the whole scene from above by Jason Nocito. All drummer photos by Joshua Wildman. We didn't have room to show all 77 drummers, so we devised a special, mystical, tarot-ish, numerological method to choose a handful of them to feature. We have full love and respect for all 77 Boadrum drummers! Thanks to JellyNYC, Nike, Scion, American Apparel, Sapporo, and Sparks for enabling this wondrous event.*

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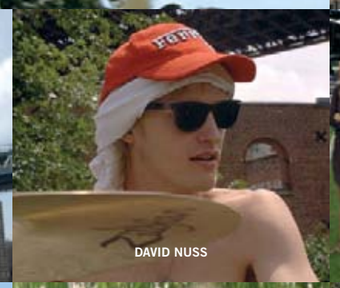
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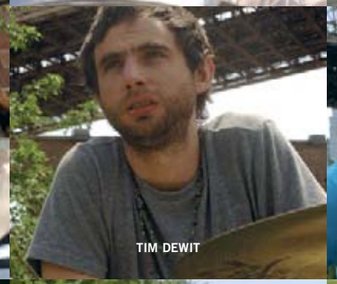
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# Let's Go on a Mushroom Hunt!

PHOTOS BY ANGELA BOATWRIGHT
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY JENAE WILKENS

*(l-r) McQ by Alexander McQueen sweater, Altamont Pants, Camper Shoes; Marc by Marc Jacobs shirt, Converse by John Varvatos pants, Camper shoes; McQ by Alexander McQueen shirt, Cheap Monday pants, Camper shoes; Brooks Brothers pants; Sari Gueron dress, Alexander Wang sweater, Kangol hat, Toujours Toi necklace; Insight dress.*

*Sari Gueron dress, Kangol hat, Toujours Toi necklace*





*(l-r): Industry shirt, Secrets of Charm shorts, Camper shoes; McQ by Alexander McQueen sweater, Altamont pants, Camper shoes*

VICE FASHION

VICE | 105

*Marc by Marc Jacobs shirt, Converse by John Varvatos pants*





*McQ by Alexander McQueen shirt, Cheap Monday pants*

*Insight dress*





*(l-r): McQ by Alexander McQueen shirt, Cheap Monday pants; McQ by Alexander McQueen sweater, Altamont pants, Camper shoes, Orciani bag*

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# Mycology 101: *The Vice Guide to Really Fascinating American Mushrooms*

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY DAVID FISCHER, mushroom expert and coauthor of *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America: A Field-to-Kitchen Guide* and *Mushrooms of Northeastern North America*. Go to Americanmushrooms.com for about a zillion more mushroom fun-facts.

### CHANTERELLES

*It's always exciting to find some chanterelles because they grow symbiotically on tree roots and can't be cultivated. I found some the other day behind a cemetery. They're very expensive to buy. Wegmans, a huge grocery store near my house, has them for $39.99 a pound, presumably picked wild from the Pacific Northwest. The Golden Chanterelle [pictured] in particular has a wonderful fruity odor, much like apricots, and it tastes delicious. But please note that all wild mushrooms must be cooked before you eat them!*

### STINKHORNS

*Stinkhorns smell like rotting flesh and are very phallic looking. The Impudent Stinkhorn [pictured] almost looks like it has a testicle down at the base, and the Elegant Dog Stinkhorn looks like, yup, a canine penis.*

*Believe it or not, when they're still in the egg stage, stinkhorns are considered delicacies in some parts of the world. They slice them open, and what's eventually going to become stinky slime is, at this early stage, high in sugar and very sweet.*

### BLUE-STAINING BOLETES

*These are umbrelloid mushrooms with a cap and stem, but instead of gills on the underside they have a layer of downward pointing tubes. It looks like sponge because you're seeing the open ends of the tubes. The cool thing about them is that they bruise blue. If you break off a piece it turns from yellow to blue before your eyes due to oxidation. Some of them make great edibles, but others are poisonous. No boletes are psychoactive, though.*

### THE JACK-O'-LANTERN

*When you're really lucky and you have fresh specimens, if you sit in a dark room and let your eyes adjust, these have a green glow-in-the-dark hue. There are a few other mushrooms that glow in the dark too, like the Luminescent Panus. I've had inquiries about glowing mushrooms from people who live near nuclear power plants. They're always disappointed when I tell them that these are common species and not radioactive mutants. They can look a lot like chanterelles, but they're poisonous. You have to be careful because you can't always see the glow.*

### THE DESTROYING ANGEL

*This is one of the world's deadliest mushrooms. It's very common and it's very poisonous. A few years ago a man in Buffalo died from mistaking them for grocery-store-variety white button mushrooms. It's not a good way to go. There are no symptoms for up to 24 hours and then you get flu-like feelings—nausea, diarrhea, chills. Then it subsides and you think you just had a 24-hour bug. Meanwhile toxins are rapidly destroying your liver. You turn yellow from jaundice and you shoot to the top of the liver-transplant waiting list. Congratulations.*

### HEN OF THE WOODS, AKA MAITAKE

*This is a widely cultivated mushroom that has a wonderful flavor and potent medicinal values. It's full of vitamins and minerals and is used to help the immune system. It also has antitumor potential; it can be used to treat certain forms of cancer. Somewhere in the Catskills they're building a huge windowless indoor Maitake-growing facility right now to supply restaurants. They can be very abundant. I've seen single large oak trees with 100 pounds of Maitake growing around them.*

### THE GIANT PUFFBALL

*This is one of the first mushrooms that my dad taught me about as a kid. We had one growing in our backyard. It's just a big, round, white ball. They have an unusual texture—light and spongy, yet firm and dry. You have to be careful cooking them. They can smake a lot if you use high heat, and you might keep adding more and more oil until you end up with a greasy mess. Be careful with the small puffballs because they can resemble a button-stage Destroying Angel. I recommend sticking with puffballs at least the size of a softball. They can even grow to be several feet in diameter.*

### FLY AGARIC

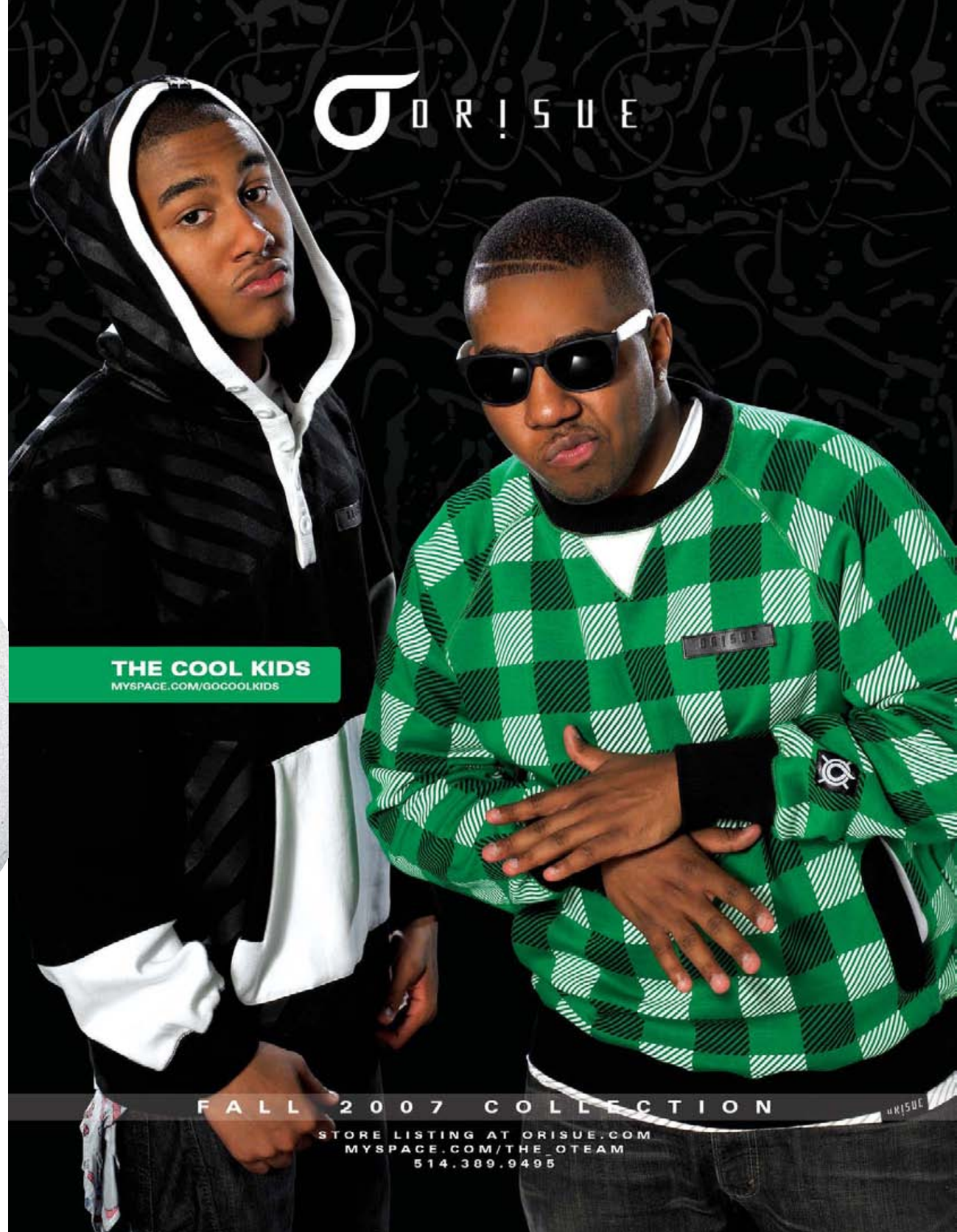
*The fly agaric, or* Amanita muscaria, *is the mushroom most commonly illustrated in children's storybooks. The red-capped variant that grows primarily in Siberia and northern Europe has potent psychedelic effects. In 1967, R. Gordon Wasson wrote a book about the fly agaric called* Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality, *which precipitated the mushroom revolution in Western civilization. In Siberia, the wealthy will buy and eat fly agaric for its psychedelic effects and then urinate into a pot and place the pot outside their front door allowing other, poorer people to come and drink the urine to get high. None for me, thanks.*

### PSILOCYBIN

*At a high dose—which is just a few mushrooms picked off a cow patty—psilocybin delivers a very powerful hallucinogenic experience. It's a totally different trip from fly agaric. In 2006, two different papers involving double-blind studies were written about using psilocybin as a therapeutic pharmacological agent. It's not a new hypothesis: In the 1950s, Alcoholics Anonymous founder Bill Wilson experimented with LSD and thought it and psilocybin might help recovering alcoholics and addicts to have a spiritual awakening so that they could follow the 12-step program. It can also be a magic bullet against acute OCD.*

*Psilocybin photo © istockphoto.com/Gordon Cable*





# Sittin' on Top of the World!

## Life, Death, and Narwhal Tail: A Greenland Scene Report

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY CAMILLA STEPHAN

My grandmother Arnaluak was born in Greenland in 1933. She grew up in a small arctic Eskimo society with her mom, stepdad, and three older brothers. They lived in houses made of stones and soil, and hunted seals and polar bears for food and clothing. There was no such thing as running water or electricity.

As a young girl she met a Danish man who was employed at the international weather station near her village. Despite his employer's laws against mingling with the locals and their vastly different cultural backgrounds, the two of them fell in love. At just 16 years of age, she boarded a small vessel heading for Denmark with him. About 50 rough days at sea later they arrived ashore to discover she was pregnant.

Despite my gran not being able to speak Danish, the two of them decided to settle there, get married, and raise my mother. A couple of decades later came a little bundle of joy known as "me." While I grew up in Denmark, my grandmother's three brothers stayed in Greenland and established their own families there.

At the end of last year I went back to Qaanaaq, Greenland, to visit them all and find out a bit more about my roots. I discovered a few important things during the trip, but chief among them was that a) it's fucking freezing in Greenland, b) they eat some gross stuff, and c) I love my family.

1

2

3

4

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*1. The day I got to Greenland, I hung out with some of my relatives, including Alika and Marianna Og Genoveva Petersen. Here they are outside a party where the main meal served was something called "little auk." In order to prepare this treat, they kill some auks (a cute swimming bird native to the island), bury them in the soil, and leave them there for about six months. Then they dig them up and eat them raw. It tastes like really, really strong blue cheese. In this photo they're offering me some more, but I had to turn it down. It's nasty!*

*2. On my second day in Greenland, I went to Karen's kid's birthday party. She's three years old and this photo shows the highlight of the day. Everybody is eating raw seal and preserved narwhal tail off the kitchen floor, cutting chunks of the flesh away with knives and chowing down with their bare hands, covered in gore. It's quite a sight. They eat the meat off the floor because it's easier than putting the carcass of the seal or the tail on the table. Narwhal tails are absolutely gigantic and have been known to snap kitchen tables into splinters.*

*3. Irene Danielsen lives at her grandparents' house because her mother gave birth to her at a very young age and couldn't take care of her. Her mother now lives in another little town, called Siorapaluk, with three kids and her husband. I hung out with her for a day and she was a lot of fun.*

*4. All the trash from Qaanaaq ends up outside the village at a place creatively known as the Dump. Everything from cars to plastic containers to soda cans to kitchen garbage to dead dogs is thrown away here. A lot of people have dogs but they don't treat them like pets. They're more like slaves. There definitely isn't the same sentimentality for a dog's life here as there is in Europe or America. Sometimes you'll see a whole pack of dead dogs lying at the Dump for weeks, slowly decomposing until somebody sets fire to the trash and it all goes up in black smoke.*

*5. After the party, birthday girl Maja Petersen took a nap in her parents' bed. Eating raw seal flesh with your bare hands off the floor can really tucker you out.*

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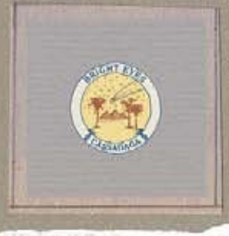

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*6. In the winter, the temperature in Qaanaaq goes down to -40° Celsius and there's so much snow that vehicles often get totally stranded. In the summertime all the snow melts and temperatures soar up to 12°.*

*7. I came across this frozen blood while walking to the hospital to see my dead uncle Jakob. I think it was from either a seal or a reindeer.*

*8. This guy looks like he's working at a meat-processing factory but he actually just got married and this is his wedding feast. This is pretty much one of the main reasons for my trip. His name is Ole Peter Nielsen and he's wearing the traditional Greenlandic wedding outfit, complete with white anorak, pants made of polar bear fur, and sealskin boots. Pants like this are hard to come by. Polar bears are extremely dangerous and if you meet one you have to shoot it before it kills you. Here, Ole is eating raw reindeer flavored with Knorr seasoning. The day after this photo was taken, his wife's grandfather, my uncle Jakob, died.*

*9. Before we left Jakob's wife, Miviskuk, alone with her dead husband, she asked me to take a photo of them together.*

*10. My uncle was taken to the hospital because he had problems breathing. He was my grandmother's older brother. I got to the hospital a short time after he died, and found him lying in a small room, still wearing his sealskin boots. He was surrounded by his whole family and everybody was crying a lot. As soon as I entered the room I started to cry as well. Even though I didn't know him well it was still really sad.*

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*11. A few days later they held the funeral. The churchyard was situated a little bit away from the village and we traveled there on foot behind the coffin. The dead man's grandson carried the cross and placed it on the grave.*

*12. Due to the frozen soil, the grave could only be dug by a jackhammer. Four men covered the coffin with soil and a small bunch of colorful plastic flowers was placed on top. Real flowers would die almost instantly in the intense cold of the Greenlandic air.*



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# ONE RAPE, PLEASE (TO GO)

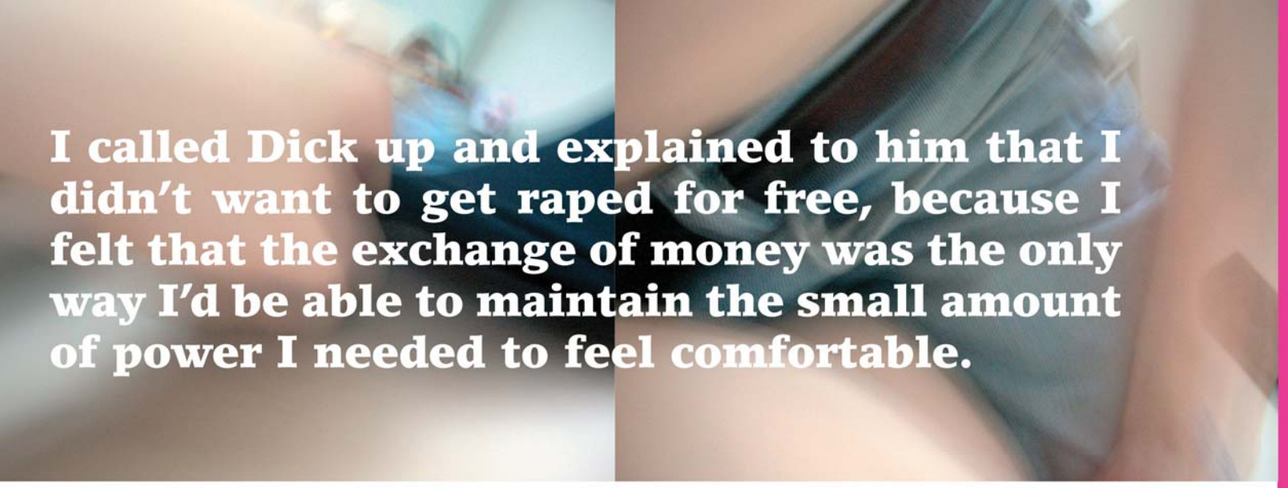
## I Paid a Male Whore to Rape Me Because I Wanted To

STORY BY TRACIE EGAN, ILLUSTRATION BY JIM KREWSON

I blame my recurring rape fantasy on the fact that I'm a feminist. I've never made any bones about getting boned in exactly the fashion that I want. But as a girl, my equipment can be trickier to manage, therefore I need to be a boss in the bedroom to ensure I get worked the right way. It gets really tiresome always being the one in charge, and don't shrinks say that people usually fantasize about the opposite of their reality? I guess that's why I find myself wishing that my typically sugary-sweet sexual encounters were sometimes peppered with assault. I decided that the best way to forfeit that control—while still holding on to a modicum of it for safekeeping—would be to hire someone for the job. Not to put too fine a point on it, I wanted a male whore to rape me.

My first thoughts were of New York artist Brock Enright, who founded Video Games Adventure Services in 2002. It's a company that provides a rather violent "designer kidnapping" for a price that actually rapes a wallet more than it does the customer, but I'd heard tell that some escort services provide similarly realistic rape and abduction scenarios for a fraction of the cost. I didn't want mine to be crazy violent, with, like, punching and stuff. (I wouldn't mind some fingerprint bruises on my wrists, but my face needs to stay pretty so I can keep getting sex for free on other occasions.) I also didn't want any duct tape involved, and I didn't want to be gagged (unless, you know, it's with a cock).

And so began my quest to hire a rapist. I started by reviewing hustlers' profiles through escort websites, but I was totally turned off. Even when they said they only serviced women, they all looked like total homos. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against gay dudes. I just don't want to get raped by one. I knew they wouldn't be "up"



**I called Dick up and explained to him that I didn't want to get raped for free, because I felt that the exchange of money was the only way I'd be able to maintain the small amount of power I needed to feel comfortable.**

for the job, har har har. I actually had a lot more luck in the "erotic services" section of Craigslist. I didn't have to go through a middleman, and all the dudes I corresponded with were more than happy to send me cock shots, free of charge.

The pictures were really important to me. One of my main concerns about hiring a hooker was that he might be ugly. I'm not one of those girls that needs an emotional connection to fuck a guy. Shit, I don't even need to know his last name. But he needs to be attractive. Swagger and wit can only get one so far. I'm into faces. And I wasn't sure I could get into it if he had an ugly one. I decided he would need to wear a ski mask, because then I wouldn't know if he was ugly, and because it would also be extra scary and thrilling and hot. Of the dudes on my short list, only one of them had a ski mask. But he also mentioned in the same sentence that he had a gun we could use, and thus ended his brief tenure on my short list.

I ended up making a date with a 21-year-old guy (let's call him Dick), who said that he exclusively services women. I liked him because in the picture he sent to my phone, he wasn't ugly. He looked half-Guido, half-frat-boy, and that seemed like a pretty rape-y combo. He assured me he could handle the rape fantasy, as role playing was his specialty. Dick said he would perform the whole fantasy, with no time limit, for $300.

Even though he wasn't heinous looking, I still wanted him to wear a ski mask. Because of my preconceived notions about hookers regarding their reliability and character in general, I decided that I'd take the reins on procuring the mask. I made the trek to a large sporting-goods store only to find out that ski masks weren't in season. Oh well. As I left the store, sans ski mask, I was gripped with just how real this was. I was going to be face to face with my rapist in a few short hours. I called Dick up and told him that there was a change of plans. Instead of accosting me outside of my apartment building, we decided that the best way to go would be date rape. We agreed to meet at a bar in my neighborhood, and get a few drinks first.

I went to the drugstore and picked up some condoms and some Tucks. I was so nervous that I was like borderline diarrhea. I knew he was just some whore, but I still didn't want to have a dirty butt in front of him. I also stopped at the liquor store, bought two bottles of wine, and began drinking as soon as I got home, to help me relax.

About an hour before our date, I got a text from Dick: "Yo, I don't want to charge for this."

I texted back, "If it's all the same, I'd rather just keep the arrangement as we have it." He responded with, "Are you a cop?"

Oh God, I thought. I called Dick up and explained to him that I didn't want to get raped for free, because I felt that the exchange of money was the only way I'd be able to maintain the small amount of power I needed to feel comfortable. Besides, at this point, a large part of the allure of this whole thing was that I was actually going to fuck a hooker. Giving me a freebie would've robbed me of that opportunity. I set him straight and an hour later, I got a text letting me know he was at the bar. It said: "I'm here babe."

As I walked up the street toward the bar, I could see him having a smoke outside. He was cute enough, but skinnier than his picture, and he looked younger than 21. I'm 28. Christ, I thought, who's raping who here?

We hugged briefly, then went inside and began pounding vodka sodas to cut the tension. I was pleasantly surprised that Dick immediately took control. He decided that our safe word would be *surprise*, and he told me that he was just going to keep coming on as strong as possible, until he heard me say the word. We played a few rounds of Erotic Photo Hunt on the bar's Megatouch. I was taking the game sort of seriously, but he wasn't really paying attention to it. He kept pushing his face into my neck, and saying stupid yet appropriate things, like, "Oh, you're such a dirty girl," and, "Yeah, I like when you touched her titty," referring to the naked girl in the game. He put on the full-court press, groping my boobs and reaching his hand down between my legs, beneath my minidress.

By this point, I was sufficiently drunk and getting turned on by his dirtbag display. My tights were soaking wet (which he, of course, pointed out). I began to think I wasn't really cut out to play the victim, because I was fighting my inner slut, which ached to push my crotch toward his hand, instead of pulling away like my fantasy required. I knew it was time to get the show on the road, before I ended up ruining the whole thing by dragging him into the bar bathroom to fuck him in one of the stalls.

We got back to my building and climbed the four floors to my apartment, with him trailing behind, goosing me the whole way. As soon as we got inside, he started in with a DFK (that's hooker for "deep French kiss") on my couch.

"Let's go to your room," he breathed in my ear. I was about to be like, "Fuck yeah," but then I remembered why we were here, so instead I said, "Oh, I don't know."

"Yeah, come on," he insisted, as he got up from the couch and pulled me toward my bedroom.

We sat on the bed and he started kissing me again. He pushed me down and I tried to politely nudge him away and sit back up, but he wouldn't let me. Whoa, I thought, this is really happening! Holy fucking shit! He grabbed my wrists and held them down with one hand as he started frantically undoing his pants with the other. I tried to wriggle free, but I was pinned.

*Blurry photos by the author (apparently it's hard to take pictures while you're being violated).*

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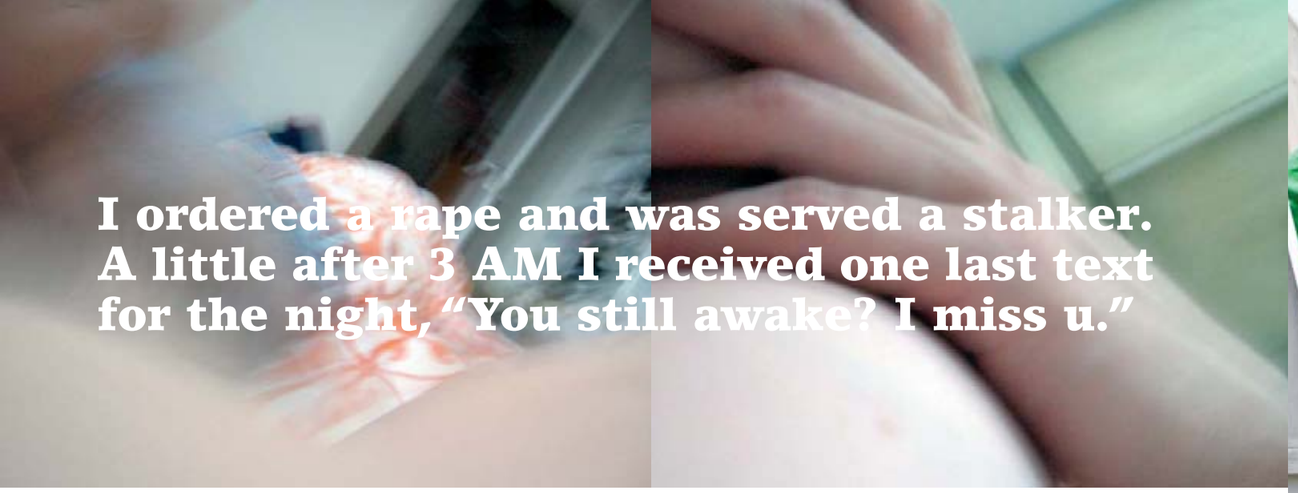


**I ordered a rape and was served a stalker. A little after 3 AM I received one last text for the night, "You still awake? I miss u."**

"Don't act like you don't fucking want it, you little bitch," he sneered.

That's actually when I began really fighting him, because I wanted to be sure that he put a condom on before anything else happened. The last thing I need in my life is a trick baby. Or HPV. I reached toward my nightstand and grabbed the strip of condoms I'd carefully laid out earlier in the evening.

He lifted my dress up over my head, so I couldn't see what he was doing, and we began a tug of war with my tights, with me trying to keep them on, and him trying to rip them off. The struggle went on for maybe 90 seconds before my tights gave way. He jammed it in.

One Mississippi, two Mississippi, and he came. Literally, two fucking seconds, and it was over. Hmm, I thought, I wonder if this is what it's like with real rape. It makes sense. Rapists are probably not too worried about premature ejaculation. It behooves them to get it over with fast.

Dick immediately began apologizing, saying, "It's just that you're so sexy. Give me a minute. I'll get hard again. Let me just collect myself." But I drowned out the sound of his voice with the sound of my vibrator. There was no way fucking way I wasn't coming after all of that. He tried to make amends by putting his fingers in me, but I swatted his hand away, saying only, "Surprise."

Within a few minutes I came twice, then tossed the vibe on the floor. Dick just stared at me the whole time. Again, he tried touching my pussy, now tender from having been properly massaged. "Surprise!" I hissed it this time, before shooting up off my bed and stumbling into my living room.

I poured myself a glass of wine, plopped down on my couch, grabbed the remote, and scanned the TV. Dick emerged from my room, wearing only his boxers. He sat down next to me and rubbed my thigh. "I want to make you come again," he whispered in my ear. I laughed in his face.

"You're so cute, how you always giggle at what I say," and then he started in with another DFK. This time, when I closed my eyes, my head began spinning and I realized just how drunk I was. I thought I might puke in his mouth, so I pushed him away.

"Why don't you get your clothes on," I said.

"No, I want to go one more time. C'mon. You know you want it."

He wouldn't let it up. So finally I was forced to yet again yell out, "Surprise! Get dressed. It's time for you to leave."

He got his clothes on and as he was tying his shoes, I reached into my bag and pulled out an envelope filled with the cash he was owed, plus an extra $50 as a tip. I handed it to him, and he said, "I still feel bad that it ended so quickly."

"Yeah," I said, "You're right." So I reached in the envelope and removed two of the 20s. "This is for the drinks I bought." I thought for a minute, reached back in, and grabbed another, saying, "And this is for coming too fast." I put his $60 docked pay in my wallet.

He hung his head and said, "Yeah, that's only fair."

I called him a cab and literally had to push him out of my place. He kept trying to hug me and gently kiss me all over my face. I grimaced as I ducked and dodged his attempts at intimacy or cuddling, or whatever the hell he was trying to do. As soon as he was gone, I sunk back into my couch. About five minutes later I received a text from him: "You sure? I just wanna make u come again and that's it."

Ugh! What the hell made him think he did it the first time? I ignored him. Six minutes later I received another text: "Oh great. Story of my life ha ha. I'll talk with you soon I hope."

I ignored that one as well. Eight minutes later I received another text: "But hey seriously you were amazing. Def give me a call some time soon."

I hadn't answered the first two, so I didn't bother answering this one either. I drank my wine and eventually passed out on my couch. My phone woke me up several hours later, at around 1 AM. It was him! I pressed "ignore" with more purpose than I ever have in my life. I saw that there were two new text messages as well. One was at 11:54 PM, about two and a half hours after Dick left my place. It said, "You still up? I bet u are… call me."

The other message was a picture that Dick took of himself—naked and wearing only a bow tie. The text said, "I really like you."

Oh my God. I ordered a rape and was served a stalker. A little after 3 AM I received one last text for the night, "You still awake? I miss u."

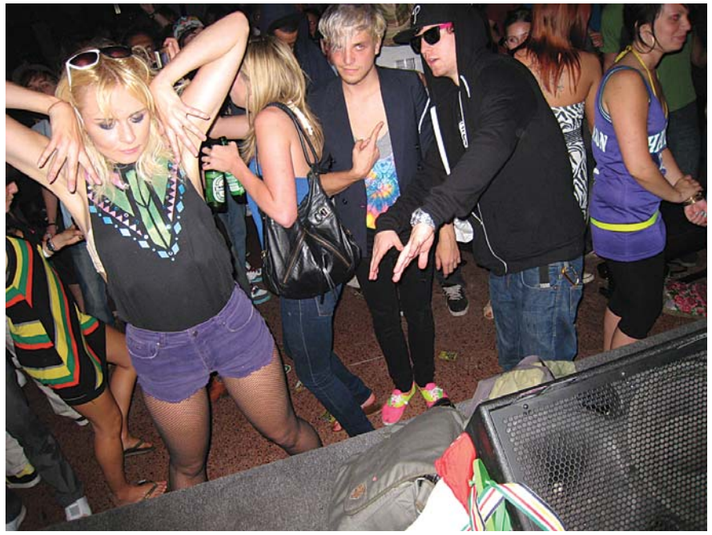
In the morning, I checked my email, and what do you know? It's Dick in my box! He wrote, "Hey little lady, sorry for calling you so much last night. I guess I was a lot drunker than I thought. LOL! But really, you are great, and I'd love to see you again. We should really hang out again."

I wrote him back, saying only, "Yeah, I was really drunk, too. Take care." That seemed like a sufficient kiss-off to me.

Two days later, guess who called me? Hi, Mr. Clingy Prostitute. I never took any of his calls ever again, nor returned his texts or emails.

You know what really pisses me off? People are always quick to accuse girls of too easily becoming emotionally attached after they sleep with a guy. But I've *never* heard of any call girl who tried to hang out with a John for free because she liked him so much. It just wouldn't happen. Women are far more capable of compartmentalizing issues of love and sex and work and play than people (dudes) give us credit for.

So, considering the way we each handled ourselves after our business transaction, it turns out that *I'm* the dick—and he's a pussy.



The secret to partying is to deserve it. When you go out every night the whole thing becomes a big boring chore but when you just finished a huge project and everyone else is happy to be there the night is so fun you wish your brain recorded video.

How did he do that? Not just make frayed letters on his jeans, but how did he become this kind of person without anyone wedgie-ing him off course?

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Matching couples used to be a DON'T no-brainer but when you look this clean we forget about the rules and dream of eating shrimp off your genitalia.

Why are uncles so much cooler than dads? Oh yeah, because uncles didn't spend a quarter of a century with you up in their grill making them bald and shitty.



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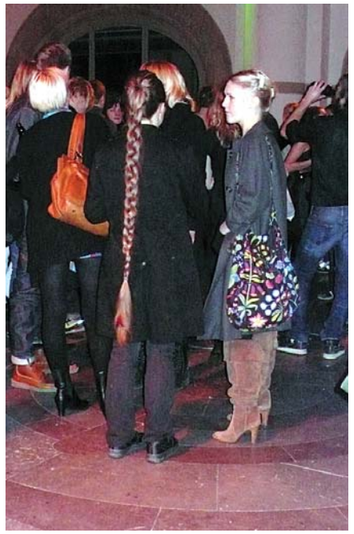
After a few dozen minutes reading some Spanish book about passion and playing with his toes, this guy curled up into the downward-dog-lotus-sleeper position and tried to catch some Zs. We all snickered but when the conductor woke him up and said, "What are you doing?" chuckles blossomed into laughs and, in the most sentimental moment of American unity since "Let's Roll," we all bonded.

Funny when you're 15. Fucking futile when you're 40.

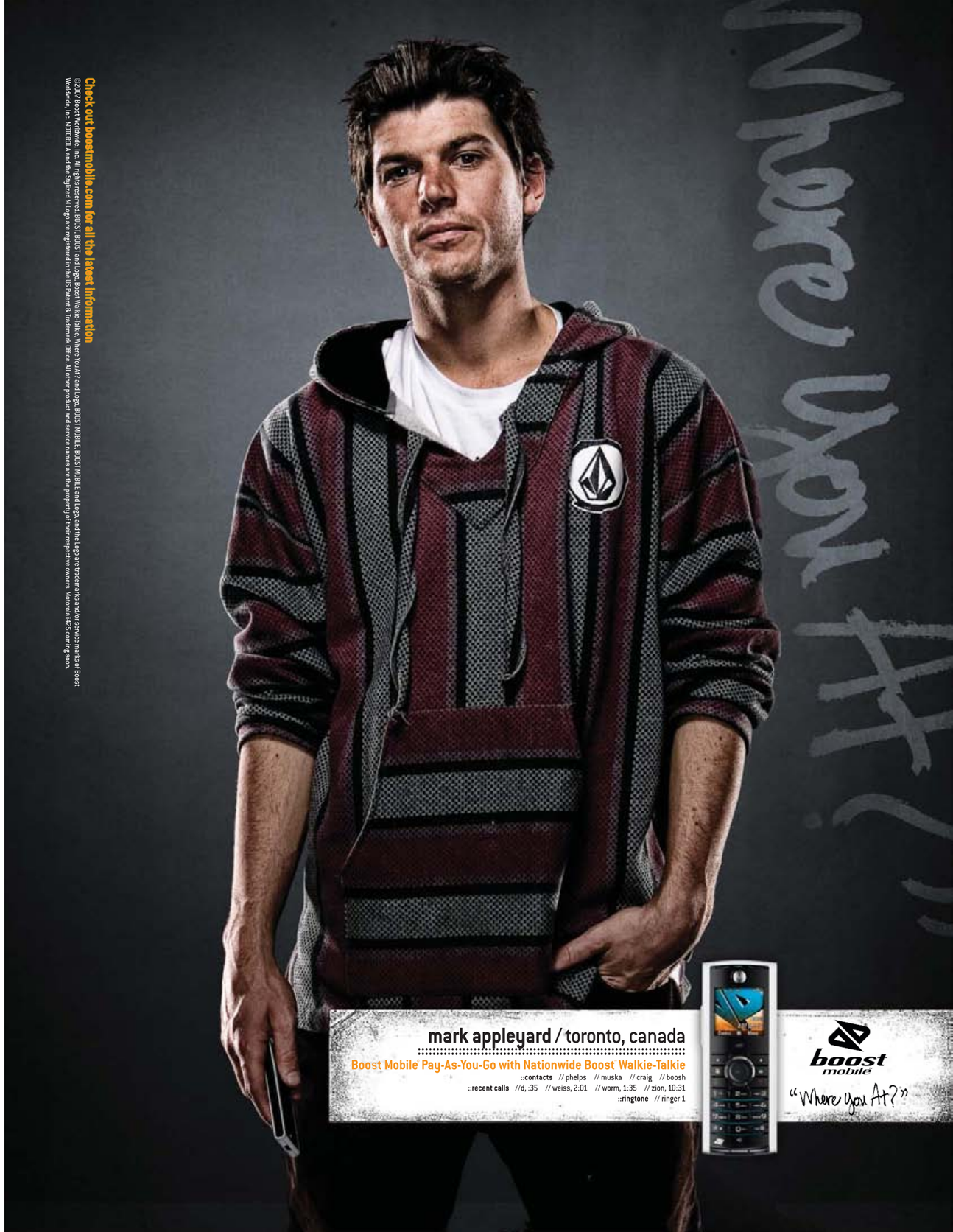


Hair is waste. So are fingernails. Growing them ten times longer than anyone else is exactly the same as leaving three days of stool in your panties.

If God has blessed you with his own image from the waist up you might not want to blow it from the waist down by becoming a lesbian contractor.

A Canadian IT guy with facial tattoos is so bad it almost made it to the DOs, but close only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades and when you're so bad you're almost good, you're just really, really bad.

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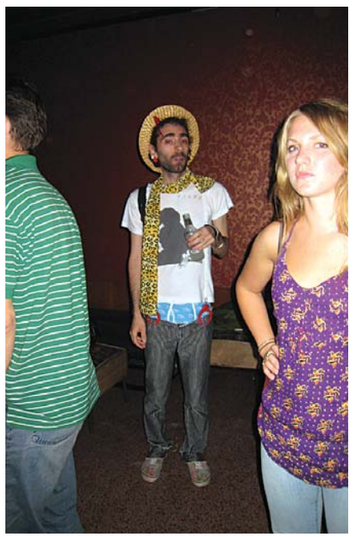
"Where You At?"

When one girl in the room understands the merits of squishing her pudge around, everyone else can dress like Frankenstein and give it up to anyone who asks, they're still invisible.

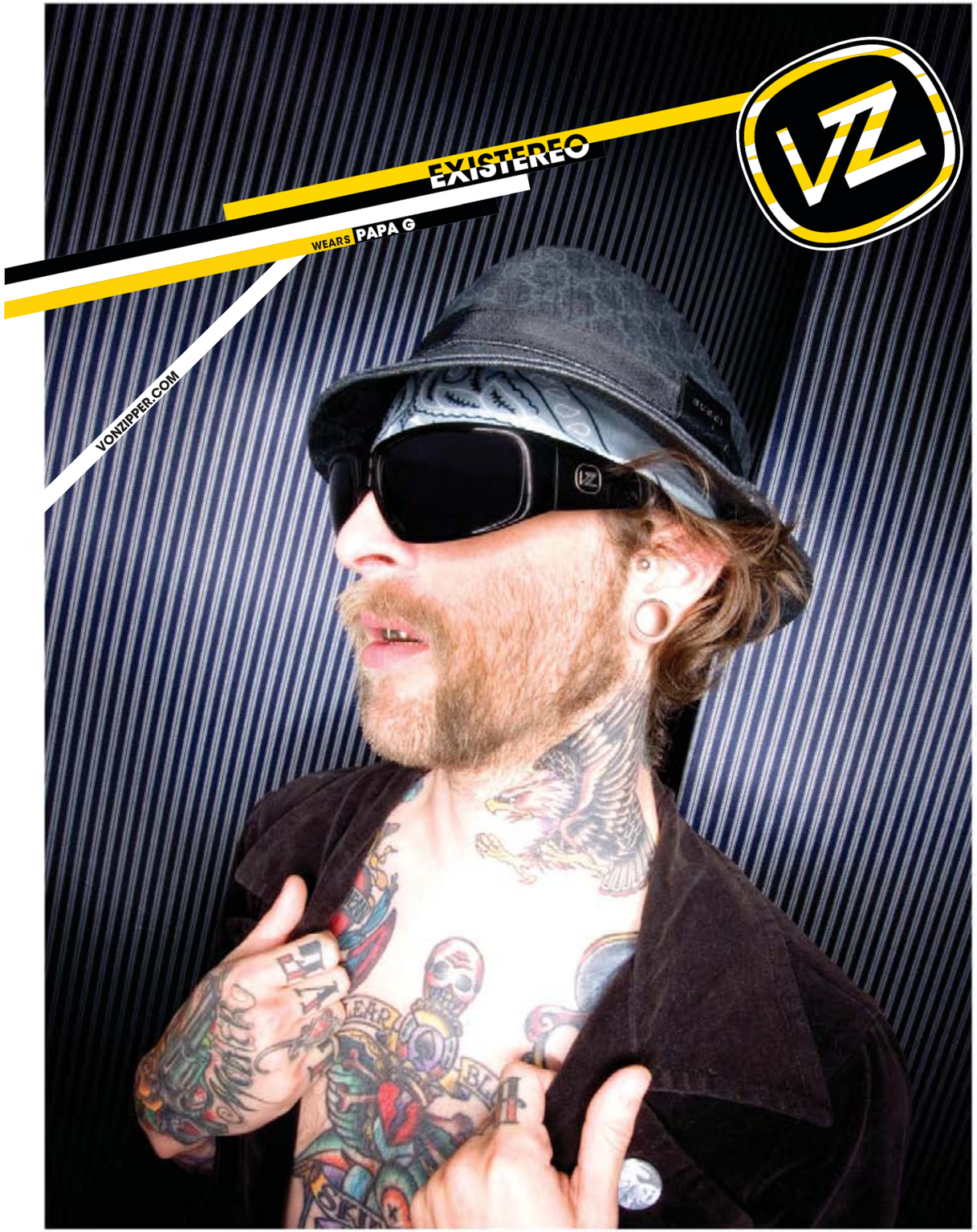
She's like those old *Yellow Submarine* cartoons if they were a long-term girlfriend you want to move in with.

This guy looks so much like a French cartoon he makes you want to grab a Gillott 170 pen nib and start the first issue of *Monsieur LeCrab*.



He made his bangs out of red tracing paper, cut his waist off and then handcuffed it to himself, and made a scarf out of a cheetah-skin draft guard. Congratulations, Pierre Pirou. You just became Monsieur LeCrab's trusty sidekick.

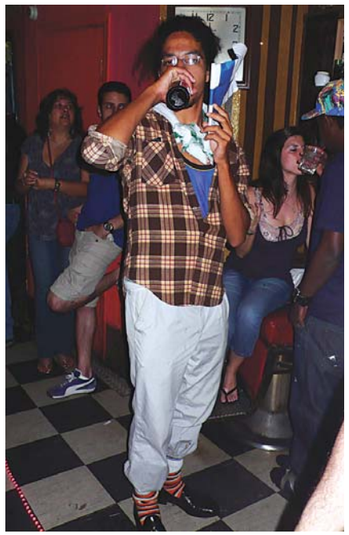
As you can see, understanding the basic elements of design is crucial to a good look. Of course, the former does not guarantee the latter as can be seen with the brown-nyloned Japanese and the socks-and-sandaled Germans.



The scariest thing about this is how common it is. Basically, any grassy knoll in the city is going to have a man, a cunt hair away from nude, lying there with his shit out like it's *28 Weeks Later* and he's the only one left.

Don't worry about me, dad. I'm alone in another city with writing on my tits that asks strangers to give me drugs.

One of the greatest inventions nerds ever came up with was a blinding ray that makes Asian chicks see whatever you want.



When asked why Finland only allows a couple hundred immigrants a year, Prime Minister Matti Taneli Vanhanen was quoted as saying, "Have you seen their fucking shoes?"

In the future Batman is going to be an out-of-work keyboard player that lives with his mother and has a website that's under construction.



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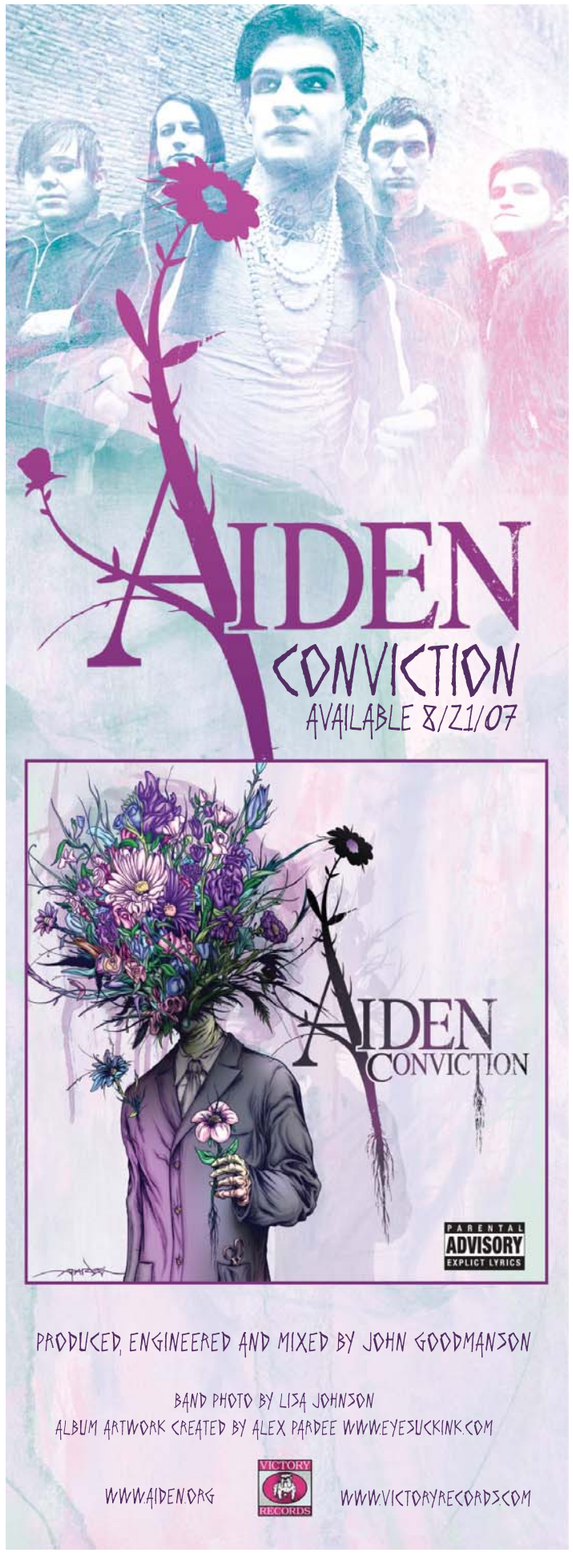

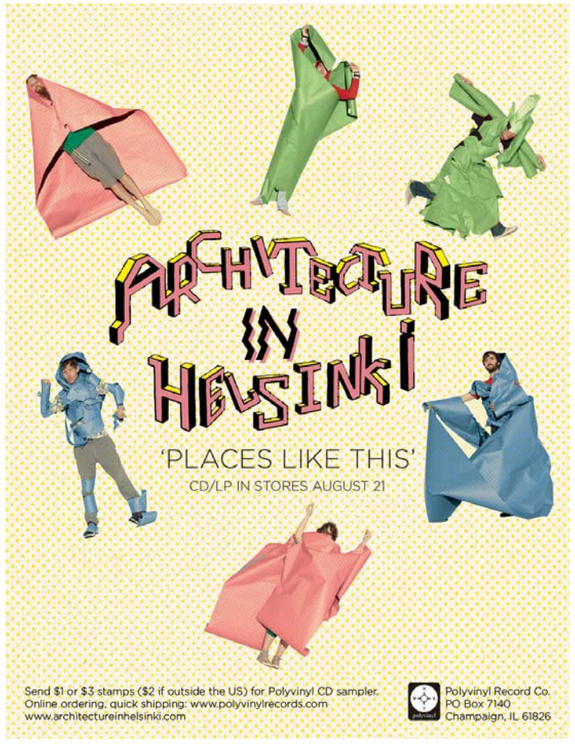
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## Shadowrun

*Platform: Xbox 360*

I like this. Usually I can just write off every new first-person shooter that comes out because too many of them come out and all they do is add new bells and whistles. It's called polishing a turd. "Oh wow, in this one you can be invisible. Wow, in this one your gun shoots this, like, rainbow-colored fuzz that traps people and then they explode and it's FUCKING CRAZY." Yeah right!

But damn, the people who made *Shadowrun* actually added some new functionality to the FPS and made it more fun in the bargain. You can do MAGIC in this game, man. But it's really simple magic that's well integrated with the game. Like you don't have to tap a bunch of buttons to cast a spell, and the spells aren't gay. There's a good one where, when you're running, you can teleport like ten feet in the direction you're going. It's pretty sweet during a fight. And there's another one where you can jump, but you go superhigh and then float gracefully back to the ground. Pretty awesome when you can time it right, get high up over an enemy, and gently drift down toward him while you strafe him with machine-gun fire, talking shit the whole way down.

That reminds me, I was wondering about multiplayer versus singleplayer campaigns. I think that singleplayers are going to totally be done away with soon if developers don't start cranking up the quality. Why play a long-winded campaign when you can just plug in, get online, and have mass carnage almost immediately? Somethin' to think about.

## Vampire Rain

*Platform: Xbox 360*

If you can get past the highly Smashing-Pumpkins-video-esque box art enough to get this into your console and join a live game, you will find a really strange world of debate, theories, and very little actual gaming. I logged into a multiplayer game of *Vampire Rain* last night and found a bunch of dudes running around, halfheartedly shooting at each other, and focusing much more of their time on discussing whether this game will be a success or not.

Here's what various nerds think… First off, the consensus was that this game is third in greatness behind *Call of Duty 3* and *Gears of War* (which is totally ludicrous). Secondly, in this game you can choose between being a person (which means you use guns and stuff) and being a nightwalker (which means you're a vampire and you run around berserk and are hard to kill but you can't use guns or climb ladders even though you can jump really high). The nerds thought that being a nightwalker was the pussy option and that people who really want to hone their skills would learn how to use the fucking guns, goddamn it. I think that being a berserker vampire is just confusing and being the regular guys is boring, plus if you're a person and you get attacked by a vampire, it's a wrap. The fuckers are impossible to kill. Another raging topic of conversation was how shitty gamers like to teach noobs their lame tactics. This is something I never thought about before and never will again, but a few guys were going on and on about how lamers teach noobs and it sucks because it just creates more lamers. That's interesting—it's kind of like vampires!

Anyway, *Vampire Rain* looks like *Castle Wolfenstein* in comparison with *Gears of War*, but then again what doesn't? I advise against this one.
PACKLESS

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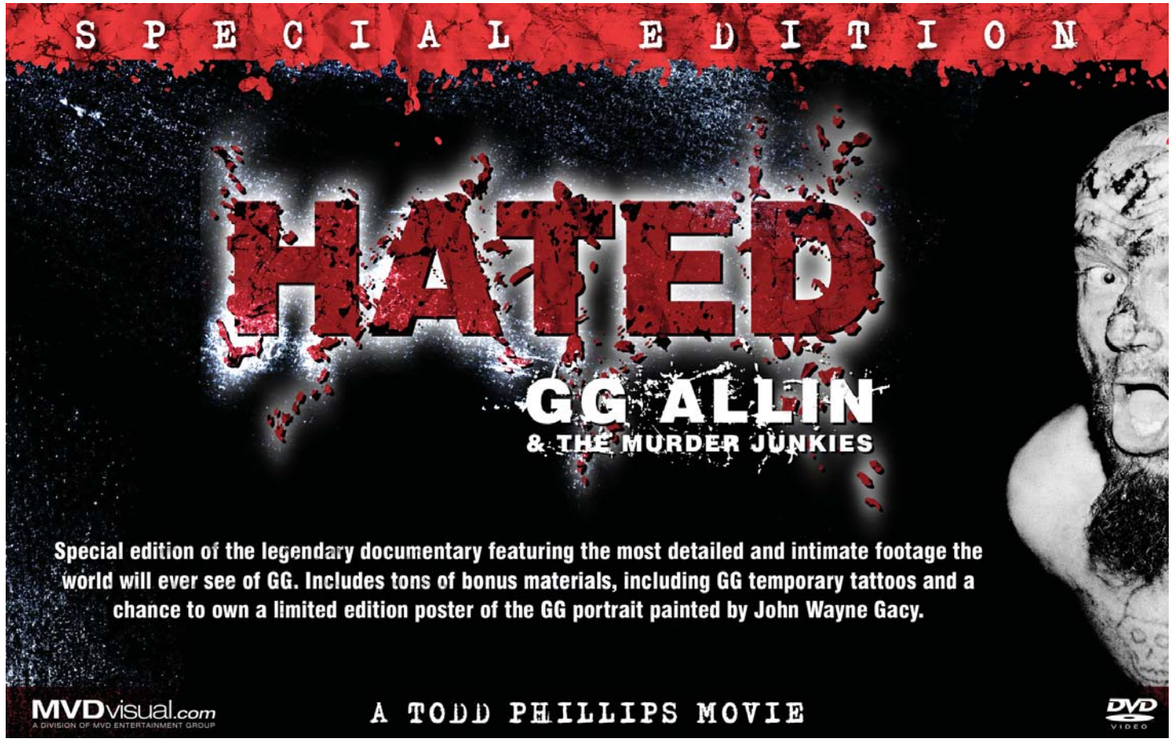
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## BARELY LEGAL CORRUPTED #8

*Hustlerworld.com*
*Dir: Van Styles*
*Rating: 8*

There's a chance that as I type this my wife might be pregnant. Despite what I may have told you before about being eager to have a child, I'm considering asking her to get an abortion. It's not that I've had a change of heart on the whole "kids thing," it's simply that I just learned Red Bull has agreed to end my book tour next month in Hawaii. HAWAII, I said! And I'm not really sure that I want to go halfway around the world with some pregnant chick, you know? Even if she is my wife. I mean, who am I going to drink with? She can't indulge in all-night booze fests with me the way we used to and I imagine that would bum her out. And if she thinks I'm not going to drink just because she can't, she's got another thing coming.

It would be cool if they did semi-abortions. Not total and irreversible abortions but abortions for flip-floppers. One day you're all, "Take this damn watermelon seed out of my vagina. I'm over it," then a few days later you could be all, "Hey, what the hell? Give me my baby back, dingo-face. Oh, you took me serious? No, no, no. I was just kidding. Obviously you don't know funny."

It would also be entertaining if they could flick little fetuses like boogers, you know like when you have a wet one on your index finger and then you transfer it onto your thumb and really send that sonofabitch flying? That would be funny, right? Once my friend had to poop while driving and didn't feel like pulling over so he just pulled his pants down, shit in his hand, and threw it out the window. I'm not sure what he did with his shit hand. Air-dried it out the window I suppose. Oh my God. Imagine he forgot he had poop hand and ran his fingers through his hair. Gross. Do people still run their fingers through their hair? Sounds so faggy-80s-romance-novel-y.

Whatever. Hawaii. What the fuck, right? Does punching girls in the stomach really work? See. That's my problem. I don't want the baby dead. I just want it to go on a fetal vacation and come back when we get back from Hawaii so that we can be selfish alcoholics in paradise for a few days. Is that asking so much? What if we froze the fetus with cryogenics—would that work? Do you think that if I packed my wife's vagina full of ice it would have the same effect? We have a crushed-ice feature on our refrigerator so I could really pack it in there good. But then I'll have to ask her to wear diapers the entire trip so all the ice doesn't fall out. She's not going to go for that—she hates tan lines. Maybe I can pack her full of ice and carry her around upside-down instead. It would be cool if I could throw some rum and fruit punch in with the ice and stick a straw and one of those festive umbrellas in her vagina and drink out of it. But I can't imagine that would be very good for the baby. That's probably how babies get fetal alcohol syndrome: fathers using pregnant mothers' vaginas as a hurricane glass. I don't know what to do. This kid is negative 8 1/2 months old and he's already pissing me off.

CHRIS NIERATKO

*For more of Chris go to Chrisnieratko.com or myspace.com/njskateshop*

## BEST ALBUM OF THE MONTH: ANIMAL COLLECTIVE

### T.I.
**T.I. vs. Tip**
*Grand Hustle/Atlantic*

"Big Things Poppin'" is a great record, but the rest of the album? Meh. Tell you the truth, this guy is overrated. I think people just like him cuz he's light-skinned. And a single with Wyclef on it? What are you thinking, homie?
OKAY HATER

### R.KELLY
**Double Up**
*Jive*

You know what? This is too easy. "Sex Planet"? "The Zoo"? "Real Talk"? The video for "Same Girl"? Hellooooooooo. Are you hearing what I'm hearing? Is he imitating monkeys? Is he talking about going up Uranus? It's like the guy wrote this specifically to get a 10 in *Vice*. Unbelievable.
MACHO

### T-PAIN
**Epiphany**
*Konvict/Jive*

T-Pain is our favorite artist in the world right now. He does self-deprecating chickenhead R&B with a Roger Troutman twist. He's the ultimate anti-pop-star and now every single hoochie mamma is lining up to touch his bicolored dreads. His first album had the sublime ballads "I'm Sprung" and "I'm in Love (With a Stripper)," but Epiphany takes the cake with the two best songs of the year, back to back: "Buy You a Drink" and "Bartender." The rest of the record is whatever but who cares.
WHOADIE ALLEN

### LIL WAYNE
**Tha Carter 3 — The Leak**
*Mixtape*

This is proof of the absolute integrity and objectivity of this publication. Our last Lil Wayne review was dithyrambic. We concluded that his *Drought 3* mixtape was the best rap release of the year. So what's up with the follow-up: all these leaked tracks from Weezy's most anticipated opus? Think we're going to hop on the kid's bozak once again? No sir. Played-out chipmunk beats and lackluster contributions from both Timbo and Kanye make this one a big disappointment. Plus Wayne's stoner flow is getting more and more abstract by the day. Dude's on some André 3000 spoken-word shit now. Lay off that purp and that Superhead and straighten your shit out, dogg.
DAVID DASH

### AESOP ROCK
**None Shall Pass**
*Definitive Jux*

Aesop and I are both from Long Island. The band I am in has a solid fan base of over-30 males shaped like eggplants and dressed like toddlers. This fucker, on the other hand, gets worldwide acclaim as well as a shout-out from Sasha Grey on her MySpace page. I don't even have to listen to this CD to know that he is doing something right and I am doing the same exact thing very, very wrong.
ARTIE PHILIE

### KINFOLK KIA SHINE
**Due Season**
*Universal*

Hip-hop music has become a one-song genre. What's funny is that all the Mimes and the Jibbses and the Unks and the Shop Boyzes of the world actually have albums too. Interested? Didn't think so.
BLAQUE PAK

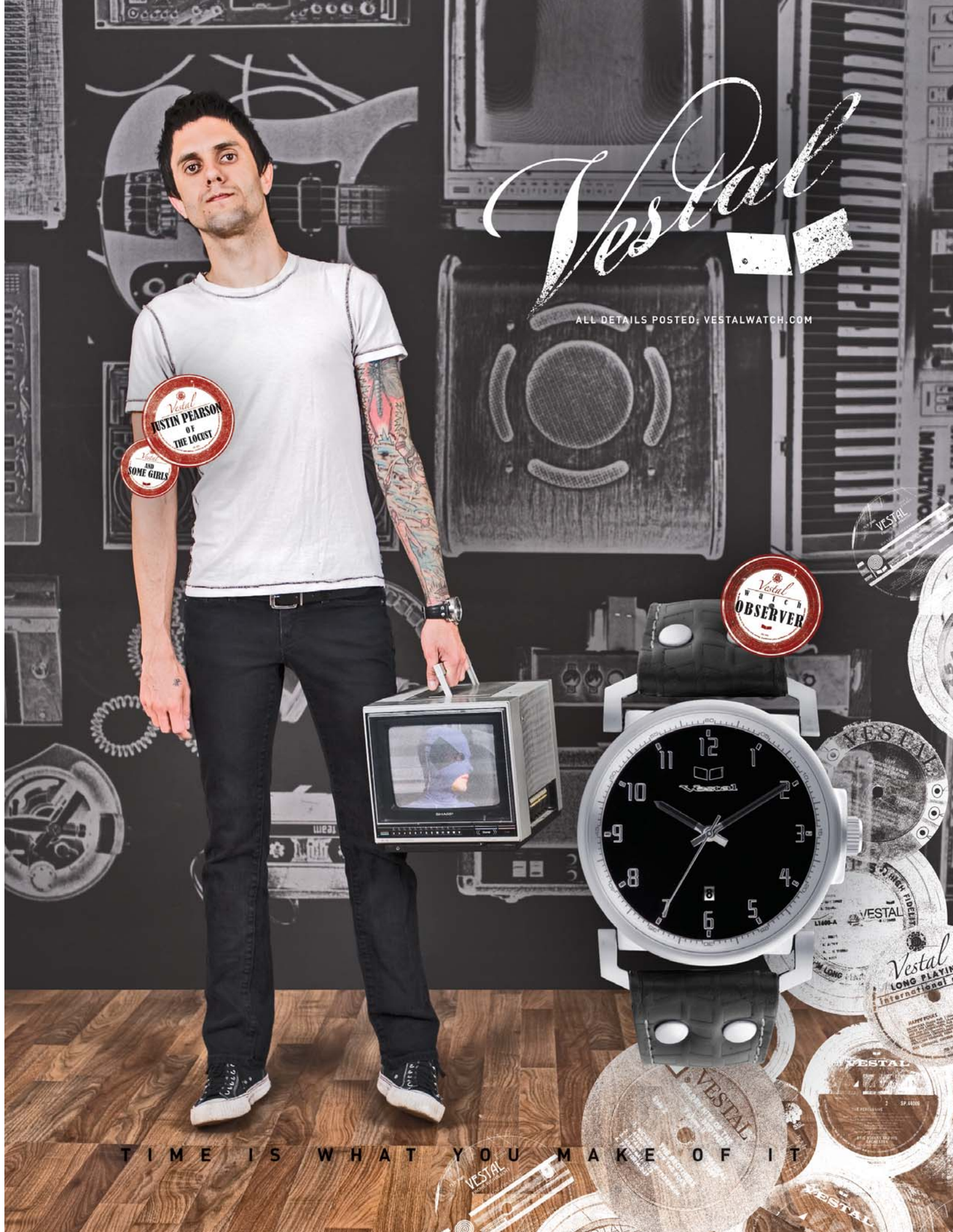
### GRAVY TRAIN!!!!
**All the Sweet Stuff**
*Cochon*

This record is all about bouffant hairdos, jacking off, sweet candy treats, cute boys, and partying. Genius, right? Apparently not to our former label Kill Rock Stars who gagged when they heard it. *Apparently* our gay-dude-meets-Mexican-chick brand of rock 'n' roll bubblegum club comedy was not ivory enough for their world. I can't imagine what it feels like to be sitting on a gold mine and then suddenly not be sitting on one. Must feel pretty weird! If there's not a sound you can dance to here then you are either a jock or a total asshole who hates life. Oh wait, there's even a song for jocks about farting at a frat party. Totally not a barfy-face album!! You'll love it.
HUNX (I'M IN THE BAND)

### ARE WEAPONS
**Modern Mayhem**
*Defend Music*

We love these motherfuckers. Boo ya!
JERKFACE





## WORST ALBUM OF THE MONTH: GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

### HEARTSREVOLUTION
**C.Y.O.A! Choose Your Own Adventure**
*RU ♥ HC*

Ooh, white heart-shaped vinyl! Awesome. This is the band of the magical duo who operate the Heartschallenger ice cream truck. You know—the pink ice cream truck with unicorns painted on it that's been showing up outside every fun event in New York all summer long? The one that sells Pink Panther popsicles and neon-rainbow Slinkies and other sundry thingamabobs? We like it so much we even did a whole episode of *The Cute Show* about it on VBS.tv. Hey—you should watch it! Anyway, this is their band and it is very fun and cute and dancey. So next time you see a lil' pink truck roll on by, flag 'em down and pony up for an Astropop and one of these babies, why dontcha?
KELLY AMNER

### WICKED POSEUR
**Drugs and Drawing 7"**
*Enduring Self*

In high school, these underclassmen made a band where they all dressed up like this one upperclassman named Arthur. Ricky as Arthur on drums. Andrew as Arthur on vocals. Jason as Arthur on bass. For Halloween, one of them (Ricky) came to school dressed as Arthur. He wore the kind of outfit Arthur wore and a little nametag that said, "Hi, my name is Arthur." Around 11 AM, Arthur came up to Ricky in the hallway and, without saying anything, pulled off his name tag and tore it into strips. Then he tore the strips into confetti and threw them at Ricky's chest. Ten years later, Arthur made this album. Arthur on drums. Arthur singing. Arthur... playing keyboard. Dear Arthur: Will you run away to Mexico with us?
AMIE AMIE AMIE

### JAY REATARD
**Night of Broken Glass**
*In the Red*

This just in: Jay Reatard is on an absolute killing spree of garage-record-ing excellence. First there was *Blood Visions* and now there's this 12-inch, which might be the best thing he's ever done. Oh wait, but there's also a seven-inch on Goner that has a pleasantly surprising Go-Betweens cover. They're all winners! I fully forgive him for hurling a full can of beer straight at my balls the last time I saw him live. That show ruled.
JAY MOORE

### FUCKED UP
**Year of the Pig**
*What's Your Rupture*

Remember a couple of issues ago when we told you Lil Wayne was the world's best rapper bar none and that we'd let you know if anything changes? Same policy applies. Fucked Up are the best hardcore band on the planet—look for the memo if the world gets turned upside down, and in the meantime get your summer playlist of *Hidden World, Da Drought 3*, and this new 12-inch ready to go.
THEPEET

### ON WATERSHIP DOWN
**Orpheus Versus the Sirens**
*Eulogy*

I was going to trash this so hard, but then I realized it's completely unnecessary to make dozens of tenth-grade kids in Asshole, Florida, feel stupid for being On Watership Down fans. We all went through that phase where we got psyched on some lame local band because, by proxy, every tiny success they had was a vindication of our own shitty existence. And when those fans are in their 20s and 30s and OWD is reuniting to play the neighborhood sports bar, they will cringe as so many of us have cringed before. So for now I say let them have their fun. Run along children, the merch table beckons!
ERNST McBLARGH

### EVERYDAY DOLLARS
**Before The Supply**
*Satan Wears Suspenders*

This girl asked me the other day if I liked "hardcore music." I said yes, logically thinking she meant Cro-Mags, Token Entry, or maybe current bands like Everyday Dollars. Turns out she was referring to something totally different that involved emaciated transvestites weeping uncontrollably and calling themselves Darkness or Blood or Ashes or some shit. Anyway, I was really glad we cleared that up.
HENRY PYM

### ALTARS
**Self-titled EP**
*Youth Attack*

Besides its ostensible worth as a collectible artifact, the main reason to purchase this puking monstrosity (meant as a compliment) is to play it loudly and in completely inappropriate contexts. For example, your roommate has invited Jehovah's Witnesses in for coffee and banter. Or, you're at the beach on a sunny day and the guy next to you is super into that Mogwai song on his iPod. Here's the party album to end all parties... abruptly and awkwardly.
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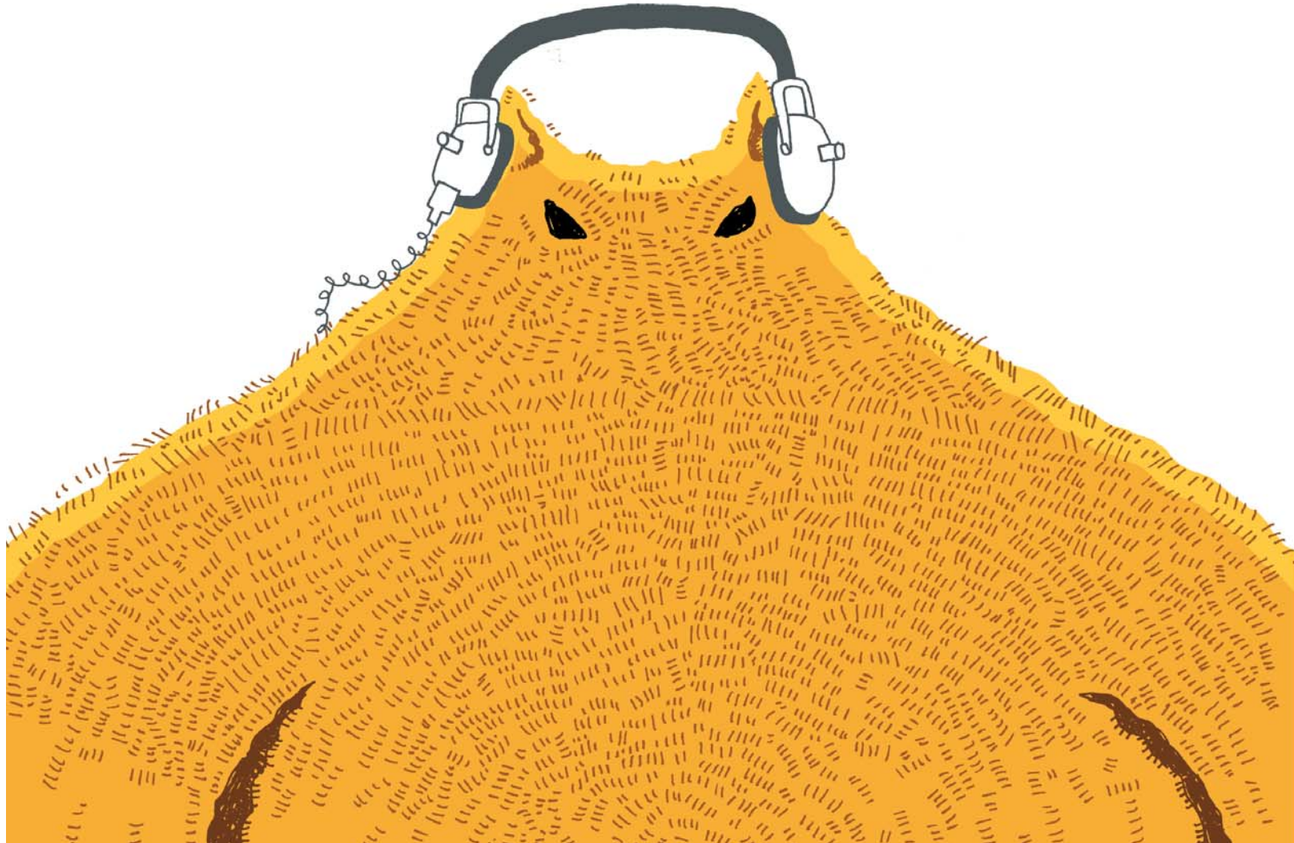


## BEST COVER OF THE MONTH: ANGELS OF LIGHT

### KINSKI
**Down Below It's Chaos**
*Sub Pop*

Now *that's* how I like my jammy instrumental postrock—nonjammy and with singing. Hey, they even quit doing that thing where they play a riff then play the exact same riff two notes higher for five minutes then call it a song. Maybe if I keep focusing my mental energies like this I can make them shave their beards and quit opening for Tool, and transform the girl-bassist into a grinning, big-assed Caribbean girl who plays the samba whistle. Or maybe I'll just burn a tiny hole in my monitor. Let's find out!
GARY ZAMPFIR

### NO AGE
**Weirdo Rippers**
*Fat Cat*

This is a comp of "choice cuts" from the vast array of vinyl 12-inches that No Age released on a bunch of different labels recently. We've been slobbering over Randy Randall and Dean Spunt for a while now and we shall continue to do so. Things they do that are awesome include: taking the cool and the uncool and make it all cool, mixing abandoned 90s guitar stylings with ultrapositive, smart/fun-guy vibes, and taking all the stuff you liked and forgot about and reminding you why you liked it again, aka "being a good band."
POM POMS

### IMPERIAL TEEN
**The Hair, the TV, the Baby, and the Band**
*Merge*

You know what? Now that Alison Bollsfeld isn't around to call this a "gay Teenage Fanclub ripoff" in front of Gabe and Andrew during PE, this is actually pretty good. I *like* this. And you know what else? I don't care if Elastica ripped off Wire for that one song (I sure wish my dad had a really good record collection instead of, you know, supporting his family)—that doesn't make it a bad song! It's called bricolage, you jerkface!
CAROLINE GARY

### LIFE ON EARTH!
**Look!! There Is...**
*Subliminal Sounds*

Not sure how it works in Sweden, but over here bookending an album of fuzzy little flower jams between a four-minute jazz-flute seizure and a 20-minute-long two-note drone is what we call "shit-coating a pearl." If you care, that is.
DENNARD SLUMPKIN

### YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS
**Colossal Youth and Collected Works**
*Domino*

You can thank Young Marble Giants for every plinky, minimal indie-rock band with a soft-voiced girl singer ever. And also Stereolab and organ-y stuff. And bands with crappy drum machines. The fact that these guys came out of nowhere in Wales in 1978-80, invented a whole new thing, and then broke up immediately afterward is pretty awesome. They have a real air of mystery around them. Plus grainy Xeroxed photos of bands from the early 80s always look so cool. People call them post-punk but they sound so sleepy and fragile, it's misleading. Let's just call them "one of those bands that rock snobs always go on about but who are actually worth checking out even if you're not a totally annoying music nerd."
MARTY MCPANTS

### DEBBIE HARRY
**Necessary Evil**
*Eleven Seven Music*

When there's someone (Gwen Stefani) basically doing what you did but a lot better (and by better we mean younger), it's time to fade gracefully away into legend status and practice accepting long-winded "we're all so indebted to you" speeches from the side of the stage. Everyone thinks the Model-T is cool in museums and books, but not so much on the West Side Highway, you know?
PJ CHASEM

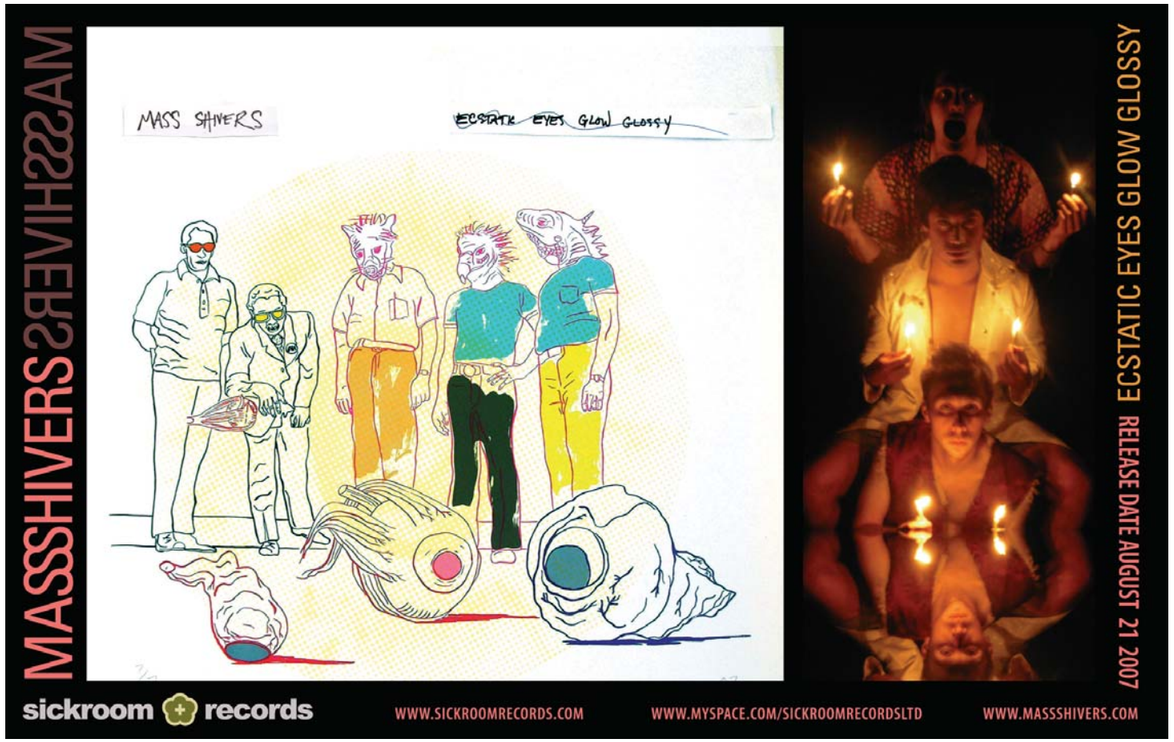
### ANGELS OF LIGHT
**We Are Him**
*Young God Records*

I can't really get a handle on how Michael Gira is aging not only gracefully but powerfully. His trademark haunting voice gets better and more visceral with time, and at this rate we're dangerously close to seeing the best records of our era pumped out of a retirement home by a guy who can't eat solids and poops himself every other day.
RUSTY OCEAN

### CHRISTY & EMILY
**Gueen's Head**
*Social Registry*

If you had tried to sell me on a pair of girls crooning out winsome melodies with an organ and quiet guitar a year ago, I probably would have punched you in the jaw





## WORST COVER OF THE MONTH: DEBBIE HARRY

between heaves. But now that some time has passed and my folk hangover has subsided, this is just the kind of hair of the dog I've been jonesing for. One of the songs ("Thunder & Lightning") even pulls off non-sucky-era Stereolab. Well played, Social Reg.
MAYNARD P. LICE

### THE HUXTABLES
**A Touch of Wonder**
*Famous Class*

This CD came attached to the back page of a pink-and-yellow construction-paper zine filled with really shitty drawings of whale-men and raccoons, which is enough to convince me that my decision to listen to it instead of, say, hurling it against the nearest wall and cleaning up the mess weeks later was an act of intervention on the part of a particularly benevolent, good-tune-appreciating god. This is exactly what I always hoped all those Paper Rad/Load bands would sound like instead of just bad noise-jazz—casual little guitar melodies with broken-y keyboards and extended *Cosby Show* samples.
LEROY GUMPTION

### HAUNTED PUSSY
**Unplugged**
*Self-released*

Hey! Just as I was lamenting the unfortunate NY-to-LA weirdo migration of the past few years, this band appears and the reign of New York City nutcases continues! Half-naked girls in tattered costumes whispering, shrieking, burping, chanting gibberish, and making spooky ghost noises over creepy chimes, echo-y singing saw, and minimal guitar? Check. Elaborate backstory involving a baby ghost who protects its 13-year-old mother from rapists? Check. Oh, what's that? They roam up and down Ludlow Street on weekends, doing guerilla performances to freak out the B&T crowd? Check and mate. God bless the loons.
JOHNNY NOSTALGIA

### VARIOUS ARTISTS
**Guilt by Association**
*Engine Room Recordings*

Sigh. If we haven't already, we hereby call bullshit on "guilty pleasures." There should be no such thing. You either like something or you don't, and don't be a pussy about it. Hold your head high! So what we've got here is an album of "cool" musicians covering "lame" songs. Will Oldham does Mariah Carey, Devendra Banhart does Oasis. Ooh, Oasis. How cheesy! How guilty! Cat Power covered "Wonderwall" years ago and didn't make any excuses. PS: "Don't Stop Believin'" is one of THE greatest songs of all time, and how ironic is it that Petra Haden, formerly of THAT DOG, is embarrassed by being associated with Journey and not vice versa. Sheesh.
MAY NELKREL

### ANIMAL COLLECTIVE
**Strawberry Jam**
*Domino*

Wow. It's pretty rare that I have the attention span for a whole album, let alone an album that's worth listening to the whole way through, but darn if this isn't the best album I've heard in ages. I love that Animal Collective don't sound like any other band. Except for a tiny bit of Beach Boys singing, there is nothing to compare it to. It's derivative of nothing. The mind boggles! Sorry to gush, but I swear I've listened to "Peacebone" like a hundred times since I got this. Do you ever have songs like that? That you just put on repeat for hours? After the initial ten listens, I realized that part of my obsession with this song is that there are subtle steel drums in the background of the chorus. It made me think about when I went to Jamaica with my cousins when I was 12. I sat at the pool listening to the steel-drum player and thinking my weird 12-year-old thoughts. My cousins were cool and took me to one of those topless showgirl revues (just like in *Showgirls*!) at the casino too. Not such an exciting memory, I know, but a fond one. See, that's how you know what songs are good. They make you think of stuff.
MEG SNEED

### SIR RICHARD BISHOP
**While My Guitar Violently Bleeds**
*Locust*

It sucks that Sun City Girls has been put to bed (RIP Charles Gocher), but at least it gives those of us born after 1975 a chance to catch up on the billions of albums and tapes and seven-inches and side projects and comps and soundtracks and stand-up acts and entire labels full of material they put out constantly. This is a three-song album of intricate oriental-sounding guitar work from Rick Bishop mixed up with a little spacey feedback sort of stuff and it's only his, oh, *ninth* release in the past year. Come on guys, cut us a little slack already.
FRANCY MELFS

### SIR RICHARD BISHOP
**Polytheistic Fragments**
*Drag City*

Oh, for fuck's sake, what did I just say?
FRANCY MELFS



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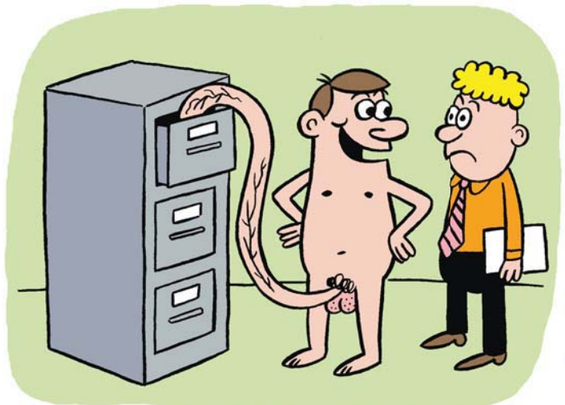

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"CAN YOU CLEAN OFF THE COPY MACHINE AFTER YOU MAKE XEROXES OF YOUR ASS?"

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